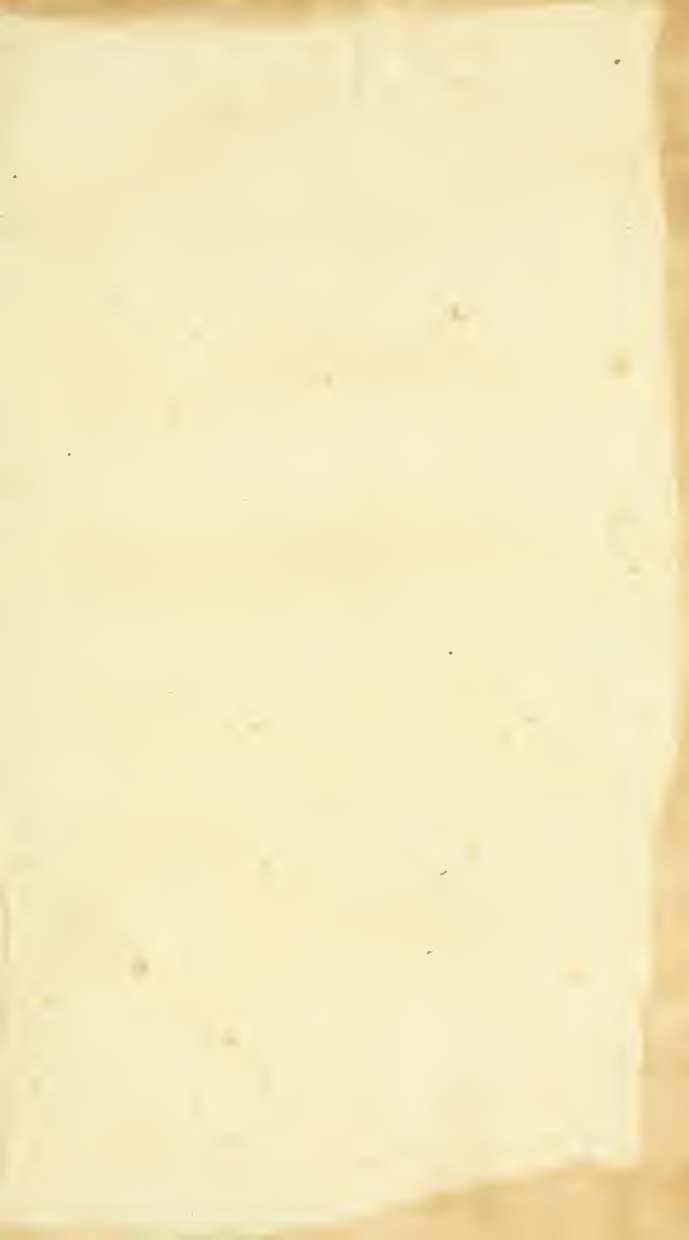




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NEW ENGLISH THEATRE

VOL. VI.

Oroonoko, George Barnwell,
Venice Preserved,
Tamerlane, Distrest Mother.



Anglica Keston sculpsit: F. Bartolucci fecit.

L O R D S

Printed for J. Rivington & Sons, W. Stahan (C. Johnston),
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O R O O N O K O:

A

T R A G E D Y.

WRITTEN BY

THOMAS SOUTHERN.

Marked with the VARIATIONS in the

M A N A G E R ' s B O O K,


A T T H E

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. BATHURST, W. LOWNDES, W. NICOLL
T. WHIELDON, and W. FOX.

M.DCC.LXXXV.

 The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas ; as in the Whole of Page 6.

P R O L O G U E.

*AS when in hostile times two neighbouring states
 Strive by themselves and their confederates :
 The war at first is made with awkward skill,
 And soldiers clumsily each other kill,
 Till time at length their untaught fury tames,
 And into rules their heedless rage reclaims :
 Then ev'ry science by degrees is made
 Subservient to the man-destroying trade :
 Wit, wisdom, reading, observation, art ;
 A well-turn'd head to guide a generous heart.
 So it may prove with our contending stages,
 If you will kindly but supply their wages :
 Which you with ease may furnish, by retrenching
 Your superfluities of wine and wenching.
 Who'd grudge to spare from riot and hard drinking,
 To lay it out on means to mend his thinking ?
 To follow such advice you should have leisure,
 Since what refines your sense refines your pleasure.
 Women grown tame by use each fool can get,
 But cuckolds all are made by men of wit.
 To virgin favours fools have no pretence ;
 For maidenheads were made for men of sense.
 'Tis not enough to have a horse well bred,
 To shew his mettle he must be well fed ;
 Nor is it all in provender and breed,
 He must be try'd and strain'd to mend his speed.
 A favour'd poet, like a pamper'd horse,
 Will strain his eye-balls out to win the course.
 Do you but in your wisdom vote it fit
 To yield due succours to this war of wit,
 The buskins with more grace should tread the stage,
 Love sigh in softer strains, heroes less rage ;
 Satire shall shew a triple row of teeth,
 And comedy shall laugh your fops to death :
 Wit shall refine, and Pegasus shall foam,
 And soar in search of ancient Greece and Rome.
 And since the nation's in the conquering fit,
 As you by arms, we'll vanquish France in wit.
 The works were over, cou'd our poets write
 With half the spirit that our soldiers fight.*

Dramatis Personæ, 1785.

	M	E	N.		<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
Aboan,	-	-	-	-	Mr. PALMER.	Mr. AICKIN.
Lieutenant Governor,	-	-	-	-	Mr. FARREN.	Mr. DAVIES.
Oroonoko,	-	-	-	-	Mr. BANNISTER, jun.	Mr. POPE.
Blandford,	-	-	-	-	Mr. J. AICKIN.	Mr. HULL.
Hotman,	-	-	-	-	Mr. WILLIAMES.	Mr. THOMPSON.
Stanmore,	-	-	-	-	Mr. R. PALMER.	Mr. CUEITT.
J. Stanmore,	-	-	-	-	Mr. NORRIS.	Mr. HELME.
Daniel,	-	-	-	-	Mr. SUETT.	Mr. QUICK.
Captain Driver,	-	-	-	-	Mr. WRIGHTEN.	Mr. FEARON.
	W	O	M	E	N.	
Widow Lackitt,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. HOPKINS.	Mrs. WEBB.
Charlotte Weldon,	-	-	-	-	Miss COLLET.	Mrs. BATES.
Lucy Weldon,	-	-	-	-	Miss SIMSON.	Mrs. INCHEALD.
Imoinda,	-	-	-	-	Miss KEMBLE.	Miss YOUNGE.

Planters, Indians, Negroes, Men, Women, and Children.

The SCENE *Surinam*, a Colony in the *West-Indies*, at the Times of the Action of this Tragedy in the Possession of the *English*.

O R O O N O, K O.

A C T I.

Enter Charlotte Weldon, in Man's Cloaths, following Lucy.

Luc. **W**HAT will this come to? what can it end in? you have persuaded me to leave dear *England*, and dearer *London*, the place of the world most worthy living in, to follow you a husband hunting into *America*: I thought husbands grew in these plantations.

Weld. Why so they do, as thick as oranges ripening one under another. Week after week they drop into some woman's mouth: 'Tis but a little patience, spreading your apron in expectation, and one of 'em will fall into your lap at last.

Luc. Ay, say you so, indeed.

Weld. But you have left dear *London*, you say: Pray what have you left in *London* that was very dear to you, that had not left you before.

Luc. Speak for yourself, sister.

Weld. Nay, I'll keep you in countenance. The young fellows, you know, the dearest part of the town, and without whom *London* had been a wilderness to you and me, had forsaken us a great while.

Luc. Forsaken us! I don't know that ever they had us.

Weld. Forsaken us the worst way, child; that is, did not think us worth having; they neglected us, no longer design'd upon us, they were tir'd of us. Women in *London* are like the rich silks, they are out of fashion, a great while before they wear out——

Luc. The devil take the fashion, I say.

Weld. You may tumble them over and over at their first coming up, and never disparage their price; but they fall upon wearing immediately, lower and lower in their value, till they come to the broker at last.

‘ *Luc.* Ay, aye, that’s the merchant they deal with.
 ‘ The men would have us at their own scandalous
 ‘ rates; their plenty makes them wanton, and in a
 ‘ little time, I suppose, they wont know what they
 ‘ would have of the women themselves.

‘ *Weld.* O yes, they know what they would have.
 ‘ They would have a woman give the town a pattern
 ‘ of her person and beauty, and not stay in it so long
 ‘ to have the whole piece worn out. They would
 ‘ have the good face only discover’d, and not the folly
 ‘ that commonly goes along with it. They say there
 ‘ is a vast flock of beauty in the nation, but a great
 ‘ part of it lies in unprofitable hands; therefore, for
 ‘ the good of the public, they would have a draught
 ‘ made once a quarter, send the decaying beauties for
 ‘ breeders into the country, to make room for new
 ‘ faces to appear, to countenance the pleasures of the
 ‘ town.

‘ *Luc.* ’Tis very hard, the men must be young as
 ‘ long as they live, and poor women be thought de-
 ‘ caying and unfit for the town at one and twenty.
 ‘ I’m sure we were not seven years in *London*.

‘ *Weld.* Not half the time taken notice of, sister.
 ‘ The two or three last years we could make nothing of
 ‘ it, even in a vizard-mask; not in a vizard-mask, that
 ‘ has cheated many man into an old acquaintance.
 ‘ Our faces began to be as familiar to the men of in-
 ‘ trigue as their duns, and as much avoided. We durst
 ‘ not appear in public places, and were almost grudg’d
 ‘ a gallery in the churches: Even there they had their
 ‘ jests upon us, and cry’d, she’s in the right on’t, good
 ‘ gentlewoman, since no man considers her body, she
 ‘ does very well indeed to take care of her soul.

‘ *Luc.* Such unmannerly fellows there will always be.

‘ *Weld.* Then you may remember we were reduc’d
 ‘ to the last necessity, the necessity of making silly
 ‘ visits to our civil acquaintance, to bring us into toler-
 ‘ able company. Nay, the young inns-of-court beaux,
 ‘ of but one term’s standing in the fashion, who knew
 ‘ nobody, but as they were shewn them by the orange-
 woman,

‘ woman, had nick-names for us : How often have
 ‘ they laughed out, there goes my landlady ; is she not
 ‘ come to let lodgings yet ?

‘ *Luc.* Young coxcombs that knew no better.

‘ *Weld.* And that we must have come to. For your
 ‘ part, what trade could you set up in ? you would
 ‘ never arrive at the trust and credit of a guinea-bawd :
 ‘ You would have too much business of your own ever
 ‘ to mind other people’s.

‘ *Luc.* That is true, indeed.

‘ *Weld.* Then, as a certain sign that there was no-
 ‘ thing more to be hop’d for, the maids of the choco-
 ‘ late-houses found us out, and laugh’d at us : Our
 ‘ billet-doux lay there neglected for waste-paper : We
 ‘ were cry’d down so low, we could not pass upon the
 ‘ city ; and became so notorious in our galloping way,
 ‘ from one end of the town to t’other, that at last we
 ‘ could hardly compass a competent change of petti-
 ‘ coats to disguise us to the hackney-coachmen : And
 ‘ then it was near walking a-foot indeed.

‘ *Luc.* Nay, that I began to be afraid of.

‘ *Weld.* To prevent which, with what youth and beauty
 were left, some experience, and the small remainder of
 fifteen hundred pounds a-piece, which amounted to
 bare two hundred between us both, I persuaded you to
 bring your person for a venture to the *Indies*. Every
 thing has succeeded in our voyage : I pass for your
 brother : One of the richest planters here happening
 to die just as we landed, I have claimed kindred with
 him : So, without making his will, he has left us the
 credit of his relation to trade upon : ‘ We pass for his
 ‘ cousins, coming here to *Surinam* chiefly upon his in-
 ‘ vitation :’ We live in reputation ; have the best ac-
 quaintance in the place ; and we shall see our account
 in’t, I warrant you.

Luc. I must rely upon you. —

Enter Widow Lackitt.

Wid. Mr. *Weldon*, your servant. Your servant, Mrs.
Lucy, I am an ill visitor, but ’tis not too late, I hope, to
 bid you welcome to this side of the world. [*Salutes Lucy.*

Wid. Gad so, I beg your pardon, Widow, I should have done the civilities of my house before: But, as you say, 'tis not too late, I hope— [*Going to kiss her.*]

Wid. What! you think now this was a civil way of begging a kiss; and by my troth, if it were, I see no harm in't; 'tis a pitiful favour indeed that is not worth asking for: Tho' I have known a woman speak plainer before now, and not understood neither.

Wid. Not under my roof. Have at you, Widow—

Wid. Why that's well said, spoke like a younger brother, that deserves to have a widow.—[*He kisses her.*] You're a younger brother, I know by your kissing.

Wid. How so, pray?

Wid. Why, you kiss as if you expected to be paid for't. You have bird-lime upon your lips. You stick so close, there's no getting rid of you.

Wid. I am a-kin to a younger brother.

Wid. So much the better: We widows are commonly the better for younger brothers.

Luc. Better or worse, most of you. But you won't be much the better for him, I can tell you.—[*Aside.*]

Wid. I was a younger brother; but an uncle of my mother's has maliciously left me an estate, and, I'm afraid, spoil'd my fortune.

Wid. No, no; an estate will never spoil your fortune; I have a good estate myself, thank Heaven, and a kind husband that left it behind him.

Wid. Thank Heaven, that took him away from it, Widow, and left you behind him.

Wid. Nay, Heaven's will must be done; he's in a better place.

Wid. A better place for you, no doubt on't: Now you may look about you; chuse for yourself, Mrs. Lackitt, that's your business; for I know you design to marry again.

Wid. O dear! not I, I protest and swear; I don't design it: But I won't swear neither; one does not know what may happen to tempt one.

Wid. Why a lusty young fellow may happen to tempt you.

Wid.

Wid. Nay, I'll do nothing rashly : I'll resolve against nothing. The devil, they say, is very busy upon these occasions, especially with the widows. But, if I am to be tempted, it must be with a young man, I promise you—Mrs. *Lucy*, your brother is a very pleasant gentleman : I came about business to him, but he turns every thing into merriment.

Weld. Business, Mrs. *Lackitt* ? Then I know you would have me to yourself. Pray, leave us together, sister. [Exit *Lucy*.

What am I drawing upon myself here ? [Aside.

Wid. You have taken a very pretty house here ; every thing so neat about you already. I hear you are laying out for a plantation.

Wid. Why, yes truly, I like the country, and would buy a plantation, if I could reasonably.—

Wid. O ! by all means reasonably.

Weld. If I could have one to my mind, I would think of settling among you.

Wid. O ! you can't do better. Indeed we can't pretend to have so good company for you as you had in *England* ; but we shall make very much of you. For my own part, I assure you, I shall think myself very happy to be more particularly known to you.

Weld. Dear Mrs. *Lackitt*, you do me too much honour.

Wid. Then as to a plantation, Mr. *Weldon*, you know I have several to dispose of. Mr. *Lackitt*, I thank him, has left, tho' I say it, the richest widow upon the place ; therefore I may afford to use you better than other people can. You shall have one upon any reasonable terms.

Weld. That's a fair offer indeed.

Wid. You shall find me as easy as any body you can have to do with, I assure you. Pray try me, I would have you try me, Mr. *Weldon*. Well, I like that name of your's exceedingly, Mr. *Weldon*.

Weld. My name !

Wid. O exceedingly ! If any thing could persuade me to alter my own name, I verily believe nothing in the world would do it so soon, as to be called Mrs. *Weldon*.

Weld. Why, indeed *Weldon* doth sound something better than *Lackitt*.

Wid. O! a great deal better. Not that there is so much in the name neither. But, I don't know, there is something; I should like mightily to be called Mrs. *Weldon*.

Wid. I'm glad you like my name.

Wid. Of all things. But then there's the misfortune, one cannot change one's name without changing one's condition.

Weld. You hardly think it worth that, I believe.

Wid. Think it worth what, Sir? changing my condition! indeed, Sir, I think it worth every thing. But alas! Mr. *Weldon*, I have been a widow but six weeks; 'tis too soon to think of changing one's condition yet: indeed it is: pray don't desire it of me: not but that you may persuade me to any thing, sooner than any person in the world.——

Weld. Who, I, Mrs. *Lackitt*?

Wid. Indeed you may, Mr. *Weldon*, sooner than any man living. Lord, there's a great deal in saving a decency: I never minded it before: Well, I am glad you spoke first, to excuse my modesty. But, what? modesty means nothing, and is the virtue of a girl, that does not know what she would be at: A widow should be wiser. Now I will own to you, (but I won't confess neither) I have had a great respect for you a great while. I beg you pardon, Sir, and I must declare to you, indeed I must, if you desire to dispose of all I have in the world, in an honourable way, which I don't pretend to be any way deserving your consideration, my fortune and person, if you won't understand me without telling you so, are both at your service, gad so! another time——

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. So, Mrs. *Lackitt*, your widowhood's weaning a-pace; I see which way 'tis going. *Weldon*, you're a happy man. The women and their favours come home to you.

Wid. A fiddle of favour, Mr. *Stanmore*: I am a lone woman, you know it, left in a great deal of business, and business must be followed, or lost. I have several
stocks

stocks and plantations upon my hands, and other things to dispose of, which Mr. *Weldon* may have occasion for.

Weld. We were just upon the brink of a bargain, as you came in.

Stan. Let me drive it on for you.

Weld. So you must, I believe, you or somebody for me.

Stan. I'll stand by you: I understand more of this business than you can pretend to.

Weld. I don't pretend to it; 'tis quite out of my way indeed.

Stan. If the widow gets you to herself, she will certainly be too hard for you: I know her of old: She has no conscience in a corner; a very *Jew* in a bargain, and would circumcise you to get more of you.

Weld. Is this true, Widow?

Wid. Speak as you find, Mr. *Weldon*, I have offer'd you very fair! think upon't, and let me hear of you; the sooner the better, Mr. *Weldon*. [Exit.

Stan. I assure you, my friend, she'll cheat you if she can.

Weld. I don't know that; but I can cheat her, if I will.

Stan. Cheat her! how?

Weld. I can marry her; and then I am sure I have it in my power to cheat her.

Stan. Can you marry her?

Weld. Yes, faith, so she says: Her pretty person and fortune, (which, one with the other, you know are not contemptible) are both at my service.

Stan. Contemptible! very considerable, egad; very desirable; why she's worth ten thousand pounds, man; a clear estate: No charge upon't, but a boobily son: He indeed was to have half; but his father begot him, and she breeds him up not to know or have more than she has a mind to: And she has a mind to something else, it seems.

Weld. There's a great deal to be made of this—[*Musings*

Stan. A handsome fortune may be made on't; and I advise you to't by all means,

Weld. To marry her! an old wanton witch! I hate her.

Stan. No matter for that: Let her go to the devil for you. She'll cheat her son of a good estate for you: that's a perquisite of a widow's portion always.

Weld.

Weld. I have a design, and will follow her at least, till I have a pennyworth of the plantation.

Stan. I speak as a friend, when I advise you to marry her, for 'tis directly against the interest of my own family. My cousin *Jack* has belabour'd her a good while that way.

Weld. What! honest *Jack*! I'll not hinder him. I'll give over the thoughts of her.

Stan. He'll make nothing on't; she does not care for him. I'm glad you have her in your power.

Weld. I may be able to serve him.

Stan. Here's a ship come into the river; I was in hopes it had been from *England*.

Weld. From *England*!

Stan. No. I was disappointed; I long to see this handsome cousin of your's: The picture you gave me of her has charm'd me.

Weld. You'll see whether it has flatter'd her or no, in a little time. If she recover'd of that illness that was the reason of her staying behind us, I know she will come with the first opportunity. We shall see her, or hear of her death.

Stan. We'll hope the best. The ships from *England* are expected every day.

Weld. What ship is this?

Stan. A rover, a buccaneer, a trader in slaves: That's the commodity we deal in, you know. If you have a curiosity to see our manner of marketing, I'll wait upon you.

Weld. We'll take my sister with us.— [Exeunt.

S C E N E, *An open Place.*

Enter Lieutenant-Governor and Blandford.

Gov. There's no resisting your fortune, *Blandford*; you draw all the prizes.

Bland. I draw for our lord governor; you know his fortune favours me.

Gov. I grudge him nothing this time; but if fortune had favour'd me in the last sale, the fair slave had been mine; *Clemene* had been mine.

Bland.

Bland. Are you still in love with her?

Gov. Every day more in love with her?

Enter Capt. Driver, teased and pulled about by Widow Lackitt, and several Planters. Enter, at another Door, Weldon, Lucy, and Stanmore.

Wid. Here have I six slaves in my lot, and not a man among them; all women and children; what can I do with 'em, Captain? Pray consider I am a woman myself, and can't get my own slaves, as some of my neighbours do.

1st Plant. I have all men in mine: Pray, Captain, let the men and women be mingled together, for procreation sake, and the good of the plantation.

2d Plant. Ay, ay, a man and a woman, Captain, for the good of the plantation.

Capt. Let them mingle together, and be damn'd, what care I? would you have me a pimp for the good of the plantation?

1st Plant. I am a constant customer, Captain.

Wid. I am always ready money to you, Captain.

1st Plant. For that matter, mistress, my money is as ready as yours.

Wid. Pray hear me, Captain.

Capt. Look you, I have done my part by you; I have brought the number of slaves I bargain'd for; if your lots have not pleas'd you, you must draw again among yourselves.

3d Plant. I am contented with my lot.

4th Plant. I am very well satisfied.

3d Plant. We'll have no drawing again.

Capt. Do you hear, mistress? you may hold your tongue: For my part I expect my money.

Wid. Captain, nobody questions or scruples the payment: but I won't hold my tongue; 'tis too much to pray and pay too: One may speak for one's own I hope.

Capt. Well, what would you say?

Wid. I say no more than I can make out.

Capt. Out with it then.

Wid. I say things have not been so fair carried as they

they might have been. How do I know but you have juggled together in my absence? You drew the lots before I came, I'm sure.

Capt. That's your own fault, mistress, you might have come sooner.

Wid. Then here's a prince, as they say, among the slaves, and you set him down to go as a common man.

Capt. Have you a mind to try what a man he is? You'll find him no more than a common man at your business.

Wid. Sir, you're a scurvy fellow to talk at this rate to me: If my husband were alive, gadbodykins you would not use me so.

Capt. Right, mistress, I would not use you at all.

Wid. Not use me! your betters every inch of you, I would have you to know, would be glad to use me, sirrah. Marry come up here, who are you I trow? You begin to think yourself a Captain, sooth, because we call you so. You forget yourself as fast as you can; but I remember you; I know you for a pitiful paltry fellow as you are, an upstart to prosperity; one that is but just come acquainted with cleanliness, and that never saw five-shillings of your own without deserving to be hang'd for 'em.

Gov. She has given you a broadside, Captain; you'll stand up to her.

Capt. Hang her, 'slink-pot,' I'll come no nearer.

Wid. By this good light it would make a woman do a thing she never designed; marry again, though she were sure to repent it, and be revenged of such a——

J. Stan. What's the matter, Mrs. Lackitt, can I serve you?

Wid. No, no, you can't serve me: You are for serving yourself, I'm sure. Pray go about your business, I have none for you: You know, I have told you so. Lord! how can you be so troublesome; nay, so unconscionable, to think that every rich widow must throw herself away upon a young fellow that has nothing?

Stan. Jack, you are answer'd, I suppose.

J. Stan. I'll have another pluck at her.

Wid.

Wid. Mr. *Weldon*, I am a little out of order; but pray bring your sister to dine with me. Gad's my life, I'm out of all patience with that pitiful fellow: My flesh rises at him; I can't stay in the place where he is. [Exit.]

Bland. Captain, you have used the widow very familiarly.

Capt. This is my way; I have no design, and therefore am not over civil. If she had ever a handsome daughter to wheedle her out of; or if I could make any thing of her booby son——

Weld. I may improve that hint, and make something of him. [Aside.]

Gov. She's very rich.

Capt. I'm rich myself. She has nothing that I want; I have no leaks to stop. Old women are fortune-menders. I have made a good voyage, and would reap the fruits of my labour. We plow the deep, my masters, but our harvest is on shore. I am for a young woman.

Stan. Look about, Captain, there's one ripe, and ready for the sickle.

Capt. A woman indeed: I will be acquainted with her: Who is she?

Weld. My sister, Sir.

Capt. Would I were a-kin to her: If she were my sister, she should never go out of the family. What say you, mistress? You expect I should marry you, I suppose?

Luc. I shan't be disappointed if you don't.

[Turning away.]

Weld. She won't break her heart, Sir.

Capt. But I mean——

[Following her.]

Weld. And I mean — [Going between him and Lucy]
That you must not think of her without marrying.

Capt. I mean so too.

Weld. Why then your meaning's out.

Capt. You're very short.

Weld. I will grow, and be taller for you.

Capt. I shall grow angry, and swear.

Weld. You'll catch no fish then.

Capt.

Capt. I don't well know whether he designs to affront me or no.

Stan. No, no, he's a little familiar; 'tis his way.

Capt. Say you so? nay, I can be as familiar as he, if that be it. Well, Sir, look upon me full. What say you? how do you like me for a brother-in-law?

Weid. Why yes, faith, you'll do my business, [*turning him about*] if we can agree about my siller's.

Capt. I don't know whether your siller will like me or not: I can't say much to her; but I have money enough: And if you are her brother, as you seem to be a-kin to her, I know that will recommend me to you.

Weid. This is your market for slaves; my siller is a free woman, and must not be disposed of in public. You shall be welcome to my house, if you please: and, upon better acquaintance, if my siller likes you, and I like your offers —

Capt. Very well, Sir, I'll come and see her.

Gov. Where are the slaves, Captain? they are long a-coming.

Bland. And who is this prince that's fall'n to my lot for the lord governor? Let me know something of him, that I may treat him accordingly: Who is he?

Capt. He's the devil of a fellow, I can tell you? a prince every inch of him: You have paid dear enough for him for all the good he'll do you: I was forc'd to clap him in irons, and did not think the ship safe neither. You are in hostility with the *Indians*, they say; they threaten you daily: You had best have an eye upon him.

Bland. But who is he?

Gov. And how do you know him to be a prince?

Capt. He is son and heir to the great king of *Angola*, a mischievous monarch in those parts, who, by his good will, would never let any of his neighbours be in quiet. This son was his general, a plaguy fighting fellow. I have formerly had dealings with him for slaves, which he took prisoners, and have got pretty roundly by him. But the wars being at an end, and nothing more to be got by the trade of that country, I made bold to bring the prince along with me.

Gov.

Gov. How could you do that?

Bland. What! steal a prince out of his own country! impossible!

Capt. 'Twas hard indeed; but I did it. You must know this *Oroonoko*——

Bland. Is that his name?

Capt. Ay, *Oroonoko*.

Gov. *Oroonoko*.

Capt. Is naturally inquisitive about the men and manners of the white nations. Because I could give him some account of the other parts of the world, I grew very much into his favour: In return of so great an honour, you know, I could do no less, upon my coming away, than invite him on board me. Never having been in a ship, he appointed his time, and I prepared my entertainment. He came the next evening, as private as he could, with about some twenty along with him. The punch went round; and as many of his attendants as would be dangerous, I sent dead drunk on shore; the rest we secured; and so you have the prince *Oroonoko*.

1st Plant. Gad-a-mercy, Captain, there you were with him, i'faith.

2d Plant. Such men as you are fit to be employed in public affairs: The plantation will thrive by you.

3d Plant. Industry ought to be encouraged.

Capt. There's nothing done without it, boys. I have made my fortune this way.

Bland. Unheard of villainy!

Stan. Barbarous treachery!

Bland. They applaud him for't.

Gov. But, Captain, methinks you have taken a great deal of pains for this prince *Oroonoko*; why did you part with him at the common rate of slaves?

Capt. Why, Lieutenant-Governor, I'll tell you, I did design to carry him to *England*, to have show'd him there; but I found him troublesome upon my hands, and I'm glad I'm rid of him——Oh, oh, hark, they come.

Black Slaves, Men, Women, and Children, pass across the Stage by two and two; Aboan, and others of Oroonoko's

noko's Attendants, two and two : Oroonoko last of all in Chains.

Luc. Are all these wretches slaves ?

Stan All sold, they and their posterity, all slaves.

Luc. O miserable fortune !

Bland. Most of them know no better ; they were born so, and only change their masters. But a prince, born only to command, betray'd and sold ! my heart drops blood for him.

Capt. Now, Governor, he e he comes, pray observe him.

Oro. So, Sir, you have kept your word with me ?

Capt. I am a better Christian, I thank you, than to keep it with a Heathen.

Oro. You are a Christian ; be a Christian still ;
If you have any God that teaches you
To break your word, I need not curse you more :
Let him cheat you, as you are false to me.
You faithful followers of my better fortune,
We have been fellow-soldiers in the field ;

[Embracing his friends.]

Now we are fellow-slaves. This last farewell.

Be sure of one thing that will comfort us,
Whatever world we are next thrown upon
Cannot be worse than this.

[All slaves go off but Oroonoko.]

Capt. You see what a bloody Pagan he is, Governor ; but I took care that none of his followers should be in the same lot with him, for fear they should undertake some desperate action, to the danger of the colony.

Oro. Live still in fear ; it is the villain's curse,
And will revenge my chains ; fear even me,
Who have no power to hurt thee. Nature abhors,
And drives thee out from the society
And commerce of mankind, for breach of faith.
Men live and prosper but in mutual trust,
A confidence of one another's truth :
That thou hast violated. I have done ;
I know my fortune, and submit to it.

Gov. Sir, I am sorry for your fortune, and would help it, if I could.

Bland.

Bland. Take off his chains. You know your condition; but you are fallen into honourable hands: You are the Lord Governor's slave, who will use you nobly: In his absence it shall be my care to serve you.

[*Blandford applying to him.*]

Oro. I hear you, but I can believe no more.

Gov. Captain, I'm afraid the world wont speak so honourable of this action of yours, as you would have them.

Capt. I have the money, let the world speak and be damn'd, I care not.

Oro. I would forget myself. Be satisfied [*To Bland.* I am above the rank of common slaves. Let that content you. The Christian there that knows me, For his own sake will not discover more.

Capt. I have other matters to mind. You have him, and much good may do you with your prince. [*Exit.*]

The Planters pulling and staring at Oroonoko.

Bland. What would you have there? you stare as if you never saw a man before. Stand farther off.

[*Turns 'em away.*]

Oro. Let 'em stare on.

I am unfortunate, but not ashamed
Of being so. No, let the guilty blush,
The white man that betray'd me. Honest black
Disdains to change its colour. I am ready:
Where must I go? Dispose me as you please;
I am not well acquainted with my fortune,
But must learn to know it better: So I know, you say,
Degrees make all things easy.

Bland. All things shall be easy.

Oro. Tear off this pomp, and let me know myself:
The slavish habit best becomes me now.
Hard fate, and whips, and chains may overpower
The frailer flesh, and bow my body down:
But there's another, nobler part of me,
Out of your reach, which you can never tame.

Bland. You shall find nothing of this wretchedness
You apprehend. We are not monsters all.
You seem unwilling to disclose yourself:
Therefore, for fear the mentioning your name

Should

Should give you new disquiets, I presume
To call you *Cæsar*.

Oro. I am myself; but call me what you please.

Stan. A very good name *Cæsar*.

Gov. And very fit for his character.

Oro. Was *Cæsar* then a slave?

Gov. I think he was; to pirates too; he was a great conqueror, but unfortunate in his friends——

Oro. His friends were Christians?

Blana. No.

Oro. No! that's strange.

Gov. And murder'd by 'em.

Oro. I would be *Cæsar* then. Yet I will live.

Bland. Live to be happier.

Oro. Do what you will with me.

Bland. I will wait upon you, attend, and serve you.

[*Exit with Oroonoko.*]

Luc. Well, if the Captain had brought this Prince's country along with him, and would make me queen of it, I would not have him, after doing so base a thing.

Weld. He's a man to thrive in the world, sister:
He'll make you the better jointure.

Luc. Hang him, nothing can prosper with him.

Stan. Enquire into the great estates, and you'll find most of them depend upon the same title of honesty: The men who raise 'em first are much of the Captain's principles.

Weld. Ay, ay, as you say, let him be damn'd for the good of his family. Come, sister, we are invited to dinner.

Gov. *Stanmore*, you dine with me. [Exeunt.]

A C T II.

S C E N E, *Widow Lackitt's House.*

Enter Widow Lackitt and Weldon.

Weld. **T**HIS is so great a favour, I don't know how to receive it.

Wid. O dear Sir! you know how to receive, and how to

to return a favour as well as any body, I don't doubt it: 'Tis not the first you have had from our sex, I suppose.

Weld. But this is so unexpected.

Wid. Lord, how can you say so, Mr. *Weldon*? I won't believe you. Don't I know you handsome gentlemen expect every thing a woman can do for you? and by my troth you're in the right on't. I think one can't do too much for a handsome gentleman; and so you shall find it.

Weld. I shall never have such an offer again, that's certain: What shall I do? I am mightily divided—

[*Pretending a concern.*]

Wid. Divided: O dear, I hope not so, Sir: If I marry, truly I expect to have you to myself.

Weld. There's no danger of that, Mrs. *Lackitt*. I am divided in my thoughts: My father upon his deathbed obliged me to see my sister disposed of, before I married myself. 'Tis that sticks upon me. They say, indeed, promises are to be broken or kept; and I know 'tis a foolish thing to be tied to a promise; but I can't help it. I don't know how to get rid of it.

Wid. Is that all?

Weld. All in all to me. The commands of a dying father, you know, ought to be obey'd.

Wid. And so they may.

Weld. Impossible to do me any good.

Wid. They shan't be your hindrance. You wou'd have a husband for your sister, you say: He must be very well to pass too in the world, I suppose.

Weld. I would not throw her away.

Wid. Then marry her out of hand to the sea-captain you were speaking of.

Weld. I was thinking of him, but 'tis to no purpose; she hates him.

Wid. Does she hate him? nay, 'tis no matter, an impudent rascal as he is, I would not advise her to marry him.

Weld. Can you think of nobody else?

Wid. Let me see.

Weld.

Weld. Ay, pray do, I should be loth to part with my good fortune in you for so small a matter as a sister : But you find how it is with me.

Wid. Well remember'd, i'faith : Well, if I thought you would like of it, I have a husband for her : What do you think of my son ?

Weld. You don't think of it yourself.

Wid. I protest but I do : I am in earnest, if you are, he shall marry her within this half hour, if you'll give your consent to it.

Weld. I give my consent ! I'll answer for my sister, she shall have him : You may be sure I shall be glad to get over the difficulty.

Wid. No more to be said then, that difficulty is over : But I vow and swear you frighten'd me, Mr. *Weldon*. If I had not had a son now for your sister, what must I have done, do you think ? Were not you an ill-natur'd thing to boggle at a promise ? I could break twenty for you.

Weld. I am the more obliged to you ; but this son will save all.

Wid. He's in the house ; I'll go and bring him myself. [*Going.*] You would do well to break the business to your sister. She's within, I'll send her to you—

[*Going again, comes back.*]

Weld. Pray do.

Wid. But d'you hear ? perhaps she may stand upon her maidenly behaviour, and blush, and play the fool, and delay : But don't be answer'd so : What ! she is not a girl at these years : Shew your authority, and tell her roundly, she must be married immediately. I'll manage my son, I warrant you—— [*Gets out in haste.*]

Weld. The widow's in haste, I see : I thought I had laid a rub in the road, about my sister : But she has stepp'd over that. She's making way for herself as fast as she can ; but little thinks where she is going : I could tell her she is going to play the fool : But people don't love to hear of their faults : Besides, that is not my business at present.

Enter Lucy.

So, sister, I have a husband for you——

Luc.

Luc. With all my heart. I don't know what confinement marriage may be to the men, but I'm sure the women have no liberty without it. I'm for any thing that will deliver me from the care of a reputation, which I begin to find impossible to preserve.

Weld. I'll ease you of that care: You must be married immediately.

Luc. The sooner the better; for I am quite tir'd of setting up for a husband. The widow's foolish son is the man, I suppose.

Weld. I consider'd your constitution, sister; and, finding you would have occasion for a fool, I have provided accordingly.

Luc. I don't know what occasion I may have for a fool when I'm married; but I find none but fools have occasion to marry.

Weld. Since he is to be a fool then, I thought it better for you to have one of his mother's making than your own; 'twill save you the trouble.

Luc. I thank you; you take a great deal of pains for me; but pray tell me what you are doing for yourself all this while?

Weld. You are never true to your own secrets, and therefore I won't trust you with mine. Only remember this, I am your eldest sister, and, consequently, laying my breeches aside, have as much occasion for a husband as you can have. I have a man in my eye, be satisfy'd.

Enter Widow Lackitt, with her son Daniel.

Wid. Come *Daniel*, hold up thy head, child; look like a man: You must not take it as you have done Gad's my life! there's nothing to be done with twirling your hat, man.

Dan. Why mother, what's to be done then?

Wid. Why, look me in the face, and mind what I say to you.

Dan. Marry, who's the fool then? What shall I get by minding what you say to me?

Wid. Mrs. *Lucy*, the boy is bashful, don't discourage him; pray come a little forward, and let him salute you.

[*Going between Lucy and Daniel.*

Luc.

Luc. A fine husband I am to have truly. [*To Weldon.*

Wid. Come *Daniel*, you must be acquainted with this gentlewoman.

Dan. Nay I'm not proud, that is not my fault: I am presently acquainted when I know the company; but this gentlewoman is a stranger to me.

Wid. She is your mistress, I have spoke a good word for you; make her a bow, and go and kiss her.

Dan. Kiss her! have a care what you say; I warrant she scorns your words. Such fine folks are not us'd to be slopp'd and kiss'd. Do you think I don't know that, mother!

Wid. Try her, try her man: [*Daniel bows, she thrusts him forward*] Why that's well done; go nearer her.

Dan. Is the devil in the woman? Why so I can go nearer her, if you would let a body alone. [*To his Mother.*] Cry your mercy, forsooth; my mother is always shaming one before company; she would have me as unmannerly as herself, and offer to kiss you. [*To Lucy.*

Weld. Why won't you kiss her?

Dan. Why, pray may I.

Weld. Kiss her, kiss her man.

Dan. Marry, and I will; [*Kisses her.*] gadfooks, she kisses rarely: An' please you, mistress, and seeing my mother will have it so, I don't much care if I kiss you again, forsooth. [*Kisses her again.*

Luc. Well, how do you like me now?

Dan. Like you? marry I don't know, you have bewitched me, I think: I was never so in my born days before.

Wid. You must marry this fine woman, *Daniel*.

Dan. Hey day! marry her! I was never married in all my life. What must I do with her then, mother?

Wid. You must live with her, eat and drink with her, go to bed with her, and sleep with her.

Dan. Nay, marry, if I must go to bed with her, I shall never sleep, that's certain; she'll break me of my rest, quite and clean, I tell you before hand. As for eating and drinking with her, why I have a good stomach, and can play my part in any company. But how do you think I can go to bed to a woman I don't know?

Weld.

Weld. You shall know her better.

Dan. Say you so, Sir?

Weld. Kifs her again. [Daniel *kisses* Lucy.

Dan. Nay, kissing I find will make us presently acquainted. We'll steal into a corner to practice a little, and then I shall be able to do any thing.

Weld. The young man mends apace.

Wid. Pray don't baulk him.

Dan. Mother, mother, if you'll stay in the room by me, and promise not to leave me, I don't care for once if I venture to go to bed with her.

Wid. There's a good child, go in and put on thy best cloaths; pluck up a spirit, I'll stay in the room by thee. She won't hurt thee, I warrant thee.

Dan. Nay, as to that matter, I am not afraid of her; I'll give her as good as she brings. I have a *Rowland* for her *Oliver*, and so thou may tell her. [Exit.

Wid. Mrs. *Lucia*, we shan't stay for you: You are in readiness I suppose.

Weld. She is always ready to do what I would have her, I must say that for my sister.

Wid. 'Twill be her own another day, Mr. *Weldon*, we'll marry 'em out of hand, and then——

Weld. And then, Mrs. *Lackitt*, look to yourself——

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Oroonoko and Blandford.

* *Oro.* You grant I have good reason to suspect

* All the professions you can make to me.

* *Bland.* Indeed you have.

* *Oro.* The dog that sold me did profess as much

* As you can do—but yet, I know not why—

* Whether it is because I'm fall'n so low,

* And have no more to fear—that is not it:

* I am a slave no longer than I please,

* 'Tis something nobler—being just myself,

* I am inclining to think others so:

* 'Tis that prevails upon me to believe you.

* *Bland.* You may believe me.

* *Oro.* I do believe you.

B

* From

‘ From what I know of you, you are no fool :
 ‘ Fools only are the knaves, and live by tricks :
 ‘ Wise-men may thrive without ’em, and be honest.
 ‘ *Bland.* They won’t all take your counsel. [*Afide.*]

Oro. ‘ You know my story, and’ you say you are
 A friend to my misfortunes : That’s a name
 Will teach you what you owe yourself and me.

Bland. I’ll study to deserve to be your friend.
 When once our noble governor arrives,
 With him you will not need my interest :
 He is too generous not to feel your wrongs.
 But be assur’d I will employ my pow’r,
 And find the means to send you home again.

Oro. I thank you, Sir.—My honest, wretched friends!
 [*Sighing.*]

Their chains are heavy : They have hardly found
 So kind a master. May I ask you, Sir,
 What is become of them : Perhaps I should not.
 You will forgive a stranger.

Bland. I’ll enquire.
 And use my best endeavours, where they are,
 To have ’em gently us’d.

Oro. Once more I thank you.
 You offer every cordial that can keep
 My hopes alive, to wait a better day :
 What friendly care can do, you have apply’d :
 But oh ! I have a grief admits no cure.

Bland. You do not know, Sir——

Oro. Can you raise the dead ?
 Pursue and overtake the wings of Time ?
 And bring about again the hours, the days,
 The years that made me happy ?

Bland. That is not to be done.

Oro. No, there is nothing to be done for me.

[*Kneeling and kissing the earth.*]

Thou God ador’d ! thou ever-glorious sun !
 If she be yet on earth, send me a beam
 Of thy all-seeing pow’r to light me to her :
 Or, if thy sister goddess has preferr’d
 Her beauty to the skies, to be a star ;

O tell

O tell me where she shines, that I may stand
Whole nights, and gaze upon her.

Bland. I am rude, and interrupt you.

Oro. I am troublesome :

But pray give me your pardon. My swell'n heart
Burst out its passage, and I must complain.

O! can you think of nothing dearer to me?

Dearer than liberty, my country, friends,
Much dearer than my life, that I have lost
'The tend'rest best belov'd, and loving wife.

Bland. Alas! I pity you.

Oro. Do pity me :

Pity's a-kin to love; and every thought
Of that soft kind is welcome to my soul.

I would be pity'd here.

Bland. I dare not ask

More than you please to tell me : But, if you
Think it convenient to let me know

Your story, I dare promise you to bear
A part in your distress, if not assist you.

Oro. Thou honest-hearted man! I wanted such,
Just such a friend as thou art, that would sit
Still as the night, and let me talk whole days
Of my *Imoinda*. O! I'll tell thee all
From first to last; and pray observe me well.

Bland. I will most heedfully.

Oro. There was a stranger in my father's court,
Valu'd and honour'd much : He was a white,
The first I ever saw of your complexion.
He chang'd his God for ours, and so grew great;
Of many virtues, and so fam'd in arms,
He still commanded all my father's wars.
I was bred under him. One fatal day,
'The armies joining, he before me stepp'd.
Receiving in his breast a poison'd dart
Levell'd at me; he dy'd within my arms.
I've tir'd you already.

Bland. Pray go on.

Oro. He left an only daughter, whom he brought
An infant to *Angola*. When I came

Back to the Court, a happy conqueror,
 Humanity oblig'd me to condole
 With this sad virgin for a father's loss,
 Lost for my safety. I presented her
 With all the slaves of battle, to atone
 Her father's ghost. But, when I saw her face,
 And heard her speak, I offer'd up myself
 To be the sacrifice. She bow'd and blush'd :
 I wonder'd and ador'd. The sacred pow'r,
 That had subdu'd me, then inspir'd my tongue,
 Inclined her heart, and all our talk was love.

Bland. Then you were happy.

Oro. O ! I was too happy.

I marry'd her : And, though my country's custom
 Indulg'd the privilege of many wives,
 I swore myself never to know but her.
 She grew with child, and I grew happier still.
 O my *Imoinda* ! But it could not last.
 Her fatal beauty reach'd my father's ears :
 He sent for her to court, where, cursed court !
 No woman comes but for his amorous use.
 He raging to possess her, she was forc'd
 To own herself my wife. The furious king
 Started at incest ; but, grown desperate,
 Not daring to enjoy what he desir'd,
 In mad revenge (which I could never learn)
 He poison'd her, or sent her far, far off,
 Far from my hopes ever to see her more.

Bland. Most barbarous of fathers ! the sad tale
 Has struck me dumb with wonder.

Oro. I have done.

I'll trouble you no farther : Now and then
 A sigh will have its way : That shall be all.

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. *Blandford*, the Lieutenant-Governor is gone
 to your plantation. He desires you would bring the
 Royal Slave with you. The sight of his fair mistress,
 he says, is an entertainment for a Prince ; he would
 have his opinion of her.

Oro. Is he a lover !

Bland.

Bland. So he says himself: He flatters a beautiful slave that I have, and calls her mistress.

Oro. Must he then flatter her to call her mistress?
I pity the proud man, who thinks himself
Above being in love: What, tho' she be a slave,
She may deserve him.

Bland. You shall judge of that when you see her, Sir.

Oro. I go with you.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *a. Plantation.*

Lieut. Governor *following* Imoinda.

Gov. I have disturb'd you, I confess my faults,
My fair *Clemene*; ' but begin again,
' And I will listen to your mournful song,
' Sweet as the soft complaining nightingale's.
' While every note calls out my trembling soul,
' And leaves me silent, as the midnight groves,
' Only to shelter you;' sing, sing again,
And let me wonder at the many ways
You have to ravish me.

Imo. O I can weep

Enough for you and me, if that will please you.

Gov. You must not weep: I come to dry your tears,
And raise you from your sorrow. Look upon me:

' Look with the eyes of kind indulging love,
' That I may have full cause for what I say:'

I came to offer you your liberty,

And be myself the slave. You turn away: [*Following her.*]

But every thing become you. I may take

This pretty hand: I know your modesty

Would draw it back: But you would take it ill

If I should let it go, I know ye wou'd.

You shall be gently forc'd to please yourself;

That you will thank me for.

[*She struggles, and gets her hand from him, then
he offers to kiss her.*]

Nay, if you struggle with me, I must take—

Imo. You may my life, that I can part with freely.

[*Exit.*]

Enter

Enter Blandford, Stanmore, and Oroonoko.

Bland. So, Governor, we don't disturb you, I hope :
Your mistress has left you : You were making love :
She's thankful for the honour, I suppose.

Gov. Quite insensible to all I say, and do :
When I speak to her, she sighs, or weeps,
But never answers me as I would have her.

Stan. 'There's something nearer than her slavery, that
touches her.

Bland. What do her fellow slaves say of her? can't
they find the cause?

Gov. Some of them, who pretend to be wiser than
the rest, and hate her, I suppose for being us'd better
than they are, will needs have it that she is with child.

Bland. Poor wretch ! if it be so, I pity her :
She has lost a husband, that perhaps was dear
To her, and then you cannot blame her.

Oro. If it be so, indeed you cannot blame her.

[*Sighing.*

Gov. No, no, it is not so : If it be so,
I must still love her : And, desiring still,
I must enjoy her.

Bland. Try what you can do with fair means, and
welcome.

Gov. I'll give you ten slaves for her.

Bland. You know she is our Lord Governor's : But,
if I could dispose of her, I would not now, especially
to you.

Gov. Why not to me?

Bland. I mean against her will. You are in love
with her;

And we all know what your desires would have :
Love stops at nothing but possession.

'Were she within your pow'r, you do not know
'How soon you would be tempted to forget
'The nature of the deed, and, may be, act
'A violence, you after would repent.'

Oro. 'Tis godlike in you to protect the weak.

Gov. Fie, fie, I would not force her. Tho' she be
A slave, her mind is free, and should consent.

Oro.

Oro. Such honour will engage her to consent :
And then, if you're in love, she's worth the having.
Shall we not see the wonder ?

Gov. Have a care ;
You have a heart, and she has conqu'ring eyes.

Oro. I have a heart ; but, if it could be false
To my first vows, ever to love again,
These honest hands should tear it from my breast,
And throw the traitor from me. O ! *Imoinda !*
Living or dead, I can be only thine.

Bländ. *Imoinda* was his wife : She's either dead,
Or living, dead to him ; forc'd from his arms
By an inhuman father. Another time
I'll tell you all.

[*To the Gov. and Stan.*

Stan. Hark ! the slaves have done their work ;
And now begins their evening merriment.

Bland. The men are all in love with fair *Clemene*
As much as you are : And the women hate her,
From an instinct of natural jealousy.
They sing, and dance, and try their little tricks
To entertain her, and divert her sadness.
May be she is among them : Shall we see ? [Exit.

*The SCENE drawn shews the Slaves, Men, Women,
and Children, upon the Ground ; some rise and dance.*

' A S O N G by a B O Y.

' *A* Lass there lives upon the green,
' Could I her picture draw ;
' A brighter nymph was never seen,
' That looks, and reigns a little queen,
' And keeps the swains in awe.

II.

' Her eyes are Cupid's darts and wings,
' Her eye-brows are his bow :
' Her silken hair the silver strings,
' Which sure and swift destruction brings
' To all the world below.

B 4

III. If

III.

- If Pastorella's dawning light*
Can warm and wound us so ;
Her noon will shine so piercing bright,
Each glancing beam will kill outright,
And every swain subdue.

A SONG by a MAN.

- Bright Cynthia's power divinely great,*
What heart is not obeying ?
A thousand Cupids on her wait,
And in her eyes are playing.

II.

- She seems the queen of love to reign,*
For she alone dispenses
Such sweets, as best can entertain
The gust of all the senses.

III.

- Her face a charming prospect brings ;*
Her breath gives balmy blisses ;
I hear an angel when she sings,
And taste of Heav'n in kisses.

IV.

- Four senses thus she feasts with joy,*
From Nature's richest treasure :
Let me the other sense employ,
And I shall die with pleasure.

During the Entertainment, the Governor, Blandford,
Stanmore, Oroonoko, enter as Spectators ; that ended,
Captain Driver, Jack Stanmore, and several Plant-
ers, enter with their favours drawn. [Drum beats.

[A bell rings.

Capt. Where are you, Governor ? Make what haste
you can

To save yourself and the whole colony.
I bid 'em ring the bell.

Gov. What's the matter?

J. Stan. The *Indians* are come down upon us; they have plundered some of the plantations already, and are marching this way as fast as they can.

Gov. What can we do against them?

Bland. We shall be able to make a stand, till more planters come into us.

J. Stan. There are a great many more without, if you would shew yourself, and put us in order.

Gov. There's no danger of the white slaves, they'll not stir. *Blandford* and *Stanmore*, come you along with me. Some of you stay here to look after the black slaves.

[*All go out but the Captain and six Planters, who all at once seize Oroonoko.*]

1st Plant. Ay, ay, let us alone.

Capt. In the first place, we secure you, Sir, As an enemy to the government.

Oro. Are you there, Sir? you are my constant friend.

1st Plant. You will be able to do a great deal of mischief.

Capt. But we shall prevent you: Bring the irons hither. He has the malice of a slave in him, and would be glad to be cutting his masters throats. I know him. Chain his hands and feet, that he may not run over to 'em. If they have him, they'll carry him on their backs, that I can tell 'em.

[*As they are chaining him, Blandford enters, runs to 'em.*]

Bland. What are you doing there?

Capt. Securing the main chance: This is a bosom enemy.

Bland. Away, you brutes: I'll answer with my life for his behaviour; so tell the Governor.

Capt. and Plant. Well, Sir, so we will.

[*Exeunt Captain and Planters.*]

Oro. Give me a sword, and I'll deserve your trust.

[*A party of Indians enter, hurrying Imoinda among the slaves; another party of Indians sustains 'em retreating, followed at a distance by the Governor with the Planters: Blandford, Oroonoko, join 'em.*]

Bland. Hell and the devil! they drive away our slaves

before our faces. Governor, can you stand tamely by, and suffer this? *Clemene*, Sir, your mistress, is among 'em.

Gov. We throw ourselves away, in the attempt to rescue 'em.

Oro. A lover cannot fall more glorious,
Than in the cause of love. He that deserves
His mistress's favour, wo'not stay behind:
I'll lead you on, be bold, and follow me.

[*Oroonoko, at the head of the Planters, falls upon the Indians with a great shout, and beats 'em off.*

Enter Imoinda.

Imo. I'm tost about by my tempestuous fate,
And no-where must have rest: *Indians, or English!*
Whoever has me, I am still a slave.

No matter whose I am, since I'm no more
My royal master's; since I'm his no more.
O I was happy! nay, I will be happy,
In the dear thought that I am still his wife,
Tho' far divided from him.

[*Draws off to a corner of the stage.*

Enter the Governor, with Oroonoko, Blandford, Stanmore, and the Planters.

Gov. Thou glorious man! thou something greater sure
Than *Cæsar* ever was! that single arm
Has sav'd us all: Accept our general thanks.

[*All bow to Oroonoko.*

And what can we do more to recompense
Such noble services, you shall command.

Clemene too shall thank you —— she is safe ——

Look up, and bless your brave deliverer.

[*Brings Clemene forward, looking down on the ground.*

Oro. Bless me indeed!

Bland. You start!

Oro. O all you gods,
Who govern this great world, and bring about
Things strange and unexpected! can it be?

Gov. What is't you stare at so?

Oro. Answer me some of you, you who have pow'r,
And have your senses free: Or are you all
Struck thro' with wonder too? [*Looking still fix'd on her.*

Bland.

Bland. What would you know ?

Oro. My soul steals from my body thro' my eyes ;
All that is left of life I'll gaze away,
And die upon the pleasure.

Gov. This is strange !

Oro. If you but mock me with her image here :
If she be not *Imoinda* —

[*She looks upon him, and falls into a swoon ; he runs to her.*

Ha ! She faints !

Nay, then it must be she : It is *Imoinda* :

My heart confesses her, and leaps for joy,
To welcome her to her own empire here. .

' I feel her all, in ev'ry part of me.

' O ! let me press her in my eager arms,

' Wake her to life, and with this kindling kiss

' Give back that soul, she only lent to me. [*Kisses her.* .

' *Gov.* I am amaz'd !

' *Bland.* I am as much as you.'

Oro. *Imoinda* ! Oh ! thy *Orconoko* calls.

[*Imoinda coming to life.*

Imo. My *Oroonoko* ! Oh ! I can't believe

What an, man can say. But, if I am

To be deceiv'd, there's something in that name,

That voice, that face——

[*Staring on him.* .

O ! if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken.

[*Runs and embraces Oroonoko.* .

Oro. Never here :

You cannot be mistaken : I am your's,

Your *Oroonoko*, all that you would have,

Your tender loving husband.

Imo. All indeed —

That I would have : My husband ! then I am

Alive, and waking to the joys I feel :

They were so great, I could not think 'em true ;

But I believe all that you say to me :

For truth itself, and everlasting love

Grows in this breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oro. Take, take me all : Enquire into my heart, .

(You know the way to ev'ry secret there)

My heart, the sacred treasury of love :

And if, in absence, I have misemploy'd
A mite from the rich store; if I have spent
A wish, a sigh, but what I sent to you;
May I be curs'd to wish, and sigh in vain,
And you not pity me.

Imo. O! I believe,
And know you by myself. If these sad eyes,
Since last we parted, have beheld the face
Of any comfort, or once with'd to see
The light of any other Heav'n but you,
May I be struck this moment blind, and lose
Your blessed sight, never to find you more.

Oro. *Imoinda!* O! this separation
Has made you dearer, if it can be so,
Than you ever were to me. You appear
Like a kind star to my benighted steps,
To guide me on my way to happiness:
I cannot miss it now. Governor, friend,
You think me mad: But let me bless you all,
Who, any ways, have been the instruments
Of finding her again. *Imoinda's* found!
And every thing that I would have in her.

[*Embracing her in the most passionate fondness.*]

Stan. Where's your mistress now, Governor?

Gov. Why, where most men's mistresses are forced
to be sometimes,

With her husband, it seems: But I won't lose her so.

[*Aside.*]

Stan. He has fought lustily for her, and deserves
I'll say that for him.

[*her.*]

Bland. Sir, we congratulate your happiness: I do
most heartily.

Gov. And all of us; but how it comes to pass——

* *Oro.* That will require

* More precious time than I can spare you now.

* I have a thousand things to ask of her,

* And she as many more to know of me.

* But you have made me happier, I confess,

* Acknowledge it, much happier than I

* Have words or pow'r to tell you. Captain, you;

* *Ev'n*

' Ev'n you, who most have wrong'd me, I forgive.
 ' I wo't not say you have betray'd me now :
 ' I'll think you but the minister of fate,
 ' To bring me to my lov'd *Imoinda* here.'

Imo. How, how, shall I receive you; how be worthy
 Of such endearments, all this tenderness?
 These are the transports of prosperity,
 When Fortune smiles upon us.

Oro. Let the fools
 Who follow Fortune live upon her smiles;
 All our prosperity is plac'd in love,
 We have enough of that to make us happy.
 'This little spot of earth you stand upon,
 Is more to me than the extended plains
 Of my great father's kingdom. Here I reign
 In full delights, in joys to pow'r unknown:
 Your love my empire, and your heart my throne.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

Enter Aboan, with several Slaves, and Hotman.

Hot. **W**HAT! to be slaves to cowards! Slaves to
 rogues! who can't defend themselves!

Abo. Who is this fellow? He talks as if he were acquainted with our design: Is he one of us?

[*Aside to his own gang.*]

Slav. Not yet; but he will be glad to make one, I believe.

Abo. He makes a mighty noise.

Hot. Go, sneak in corners, whisper out your griefs,
 For fear your masters hear you: Cinge and crouch
 Under the bloody whip, like beaten curs,
 That lick their wounds, and know no other cure,
 All, wretches all! you feel their cruelty,
 As much as I can feel, but dare not groan.
 For my part, while I have a life and tongue,
 I'll curse the authors of my slavery.

Abo.

Abo. Have you been long a slave?

Hot. Yes, many years.

Abo. And do you only curse?

Hot. Curse! only curse! I cannot conjure,
To raise the spirits up of other men:
I am but one. O! for a soul of fire,
To warm and animate our common cause,
And make a body of us; then I would
Do something more than curse.

Abo. That body set on foot, you would be one,
A limb, to lend it motion?

Hot. I would be
The heart of it; the head, the hand, and heart:
Would I could see the day.

Abo. You will do all yourself.

Hot. I would do more
Than I shall speak, but I may find a time——

Abo. The time may come to you; be ready for't.
Methinks he talks too much; I'll know him more
Before I trust him farther. [*Aside.*

Slav. If he dares
Half what he says, he'll be of use to us.

Enter Blandford.

Bland. If there be any one among you here
That did belong to *Oroonoko*, speak,
I come to him.

Abo. I did belong to him; *Aboan* my name.

Bland. You are the man I want; pray come with me.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Oroonoko and Imoinda.

Oro. I do not blame my father for his love:
(Tho' that had been enough to ruin me.)
'Twas Nature's fault that made you, like the sun,
'The reasonable worship of mankind:
'He could not help his adoration.
'Age had not lock'd his senses up so close,
'But he had eyes, that open'd to his soul,
'And took your beauties in: He felt your pow'r,
'And therefore I forgive his loving you:
But, when I think on his barbarity,

That

That could expose you to so many wrongs ;
 Driving you out to wretched slavery,
 Only for being mine ; then I confess
 I wish I could forget the name of son,
 That I might curse the tyrant.

Imo. I will bless him,
 For I have found you here : Heav'n only knows
 What is reserv'd for us : But, if we guess
 The future by the past, our fortune must
 Be wonderful, above the common size
 Of good or ill ; it must be in extremes :
 Extremely happy, or extremely wretched.

Oro. 'Tis in our pow'r to make it happy now.

Imo. But not to keep it so.

Enter Blandford and Aboan.

Bland. My royal lord !

I have a present for you.

Oro. *Aboan !*

Abo. Your lowest slave.

Oro. My try'd and valued friend !

This worthy man always prevents my wants :
 I only wish'd, and he has brought thee to me.
 Thou art surpriz'd : Carry thy duty there ;

[Aboan goes to Imoinda, and falls at her feet.]

While I acknowledge mine, how shall I thank you ?

Bland. Believe me honest to your interest,
 And I am more than paid. I have secur'd
 That all your followers shall be gently us'd.
 Shall wait upon your person, while you stay
 Among us.

Oro. I owe every thing to you.

Bland. You must not think you are in slavery.

Oro. I do not find I am.

Bland. Kind Heav'n has miraculously sent
 Those comforts, that may teach you to expect
 Its farther care, in your deliverance.

Oro. I sometimes think, myself, Heav'n is concern'd
 For my deliverance.

Bland.

Bland. It will be soon ;

You may expect it. Pray, in the mean time,
Appear as chearful as you can among us.

You have some enemies, that represent
You dangerous, and would be glad to find
A reason, in your discontent, to fear :

They watch your looks. But there are honest men,
Who are your friends : You are secur'd in them.

Oro. I thank you for your caution.

Bland. I will leave you :

And be assur'd, I wish your liberty.

[*Exit.*

Abo. He speaks you very fair.

Oro. He means me fair.

Abo. If he should not, my lord ?

Oro. If he should not ?

I'll not suspect his truth : But, if I did,
What shall I get by doubting ?

Abo. You secure

Not to be disappointed : But, besides,
There's this advantage in suspecting him :
When you put off the hopes of other men,
You will rely upon your god-like self ;
And then you may be sure of liberty.

Oro. Be sure of liberty ! what dost thou mean ;
Advising to rely upon myself ?

I think I may be sure on't : We must wait :

'Tis worth a little patience.. [Turning to Imoinda.

Abo. O my lord !

Oro. What dost thou drive at ?

Abo. Sir, another time

You would have found it sooner : But I see
Love has your heart, and takes up all your thoughts..

Oro. And can't thou blame me ?

Abo. Sir, I must not blame you.

But, as our fortune stands, there is a passion
(Your pardon, royal mistress, I must speak)
That would become you better than your love :

A brave resentment ; which, inspir'd by you,
Might kindle and diffuse a gen'rous rage
Among the slaves, to rouse and shake our chains..

And

And struggle to be free.

Oro. How can we help ourselves?

Abo. I knew you when you would have found a way.
How help ourselves! the very *Indians* teach us:

We need but to attempt our liberty,
And we carry it. We have hands sufficient,
Double the number of our master's force,
Ready to be employ'd. 'What hinders us
'To set 'em at work?' We want but you,
To head our enterprize, and bid us strike.

Oro. What would you do?

Abo. Cut our oppressors throats.

Oro. And you would have me join in your design of murder?

Abo. It deserves a better name:
But, be it what it will, 'tis justify'd
By self-defence, and natural liberty.

Oro. I'll hear no more on't.

Abo. I'm sorry for't.

Oro. Nor shall you think of it!

Abo. Not think of it!

Oro. No, I command you not.

Abo. Remember, Sir,

You are a slave yourself, and to command
Is now another's right. Not think of it!
Since the first moment they put on my chains,
I've thought of nothing but the weight of 'em,
And how to throw 'em off: Can your's sit easy?

Oro. I have a sense of my condition,
As painful, and as quick, as your's can be.
I feel for my *Imoinda* and myself;
Imoinda! much the tenderest part of me.
But tho' I languish for my liberty,
I would not buy it at the Christian price
Of black ingratitude: They sha'not say,
That we deserv'd our fortune by our crimes.
Murder the innocent!

Abo. The innocent!

Oro. These men are so, whom you would rise against;
If we are slaves, they did not make us slaves.

But

But bought us in an honest way of trade :
 As we have done before 'em, bought and sold
 Many a wretch, and never thought it wrong.
 ' They paid our price for us, and we are now
 ' Their property, a part of their estate,
 ' To manage as they please. Mistake me not,'
 I do not tamely say, that we should bear
 All they could lay upon us : But we find
 The load so light, so little to be felt,
 (Considering they have us in their pow'r,
 And may inflict what grievances they please)
 We ought not to complain.

Abb. My royal lord !

You do not know the heavy grievances,
 The toils, the labours, weary drudgeries,
 Which they impose ; burdens more fit for beasts,
 For senseless beasts to bear, than thinking men.
 Then if you saw the bloody cruelties
 They execute on every slight offence ;
 Nay, sometimes in their proud, insulting sport,
 How worse than dogs they lash their fellow-creatures ;
 Your heart would bleed for 'em. Oh ! could you know
 How many wretches lift their hands and eyes
 To you for their relief !

Oro. I pity 'em,
 And with I could with honesty do more.

Abb. You must do more, and may, with honesty.
 O royal Sir, remember who you are,
 A prince, born for the good of other men :
 Whose god-like office is to draw the sword
 Against oppression, and set free mankind :
 And this I'm sure you think oppression now.
 What tho' you have not felt these miseries,
 Never believe you are oblig'd to them :
 They have their selfish reasons, may be, now,
 For using of you well : But there will come
 A time, when you must have your share of 'em.

Oro. You see how little cause I have to think so :
 Favour'd in my own person, in my friends ;
 Indulg'd in all that can concern my care,

In my *Imoinda's* soft society. [Embracing her.

Abo. And, therefore, would you lie contented down
In the forgetfulness, and arms of love,
To get young princes for 'em?

Oro. Say't thou! ha!

Abo. Princes, the heirs of empire, and the last
Of your illustrious lineage, to be born
To pamper up their pride, and be their slaves?

Oro. *Imoinda!* save me, save me from that thought.

'Imo. There is no safety from it: I have long
' Suffer'd it with a mother's labouring pains;
' And can no longer. Kill me, kill me now,
' While I am blest'd, and happy in your love;
' Rather than let me live to see you hate me:
' As you must hate me; me, the only cause,
' The fountain of these flowing miseries:
' Dry up the spring of life, this pois'nous spring,
' That swells so fast, to overwhelm us all.

'Oro.' Shall the dear babe, the eldest of my hopes,
Whom I begot a prince, be born a slave?
The treasure of this temple was design'd
T'enrich a kingdom's fortune: Shall it here
Be seiz'd upon by vile unhallow'd hands,
To be employ'd in uses most profane?

Abo. In most unworthy uses; think of that;
And, while you may, prevent it. 'O my lord,
' Rely on nothing that they say to you.
' They speak you fair, I knew, and bid you wait:
' But think what 'tis to wait on promises,
' And promises of men who know no tie
' Upon their words, against their interest:
' And where's their interest in freeing you?

'Imo. O! where indeed, to lose so many slaves?

'Abo. Nay, grant this man, you think so much
' your friend,
' Be honest, and intends all that he says;
' He is but one; and in a government,
' Where, he confesses, you have enemies,
' That watch your looks. What looks can you put on,
' To please these men, who are before resolv'd
' To read 'em their own way? Alas! my lord,

' If

‘ If they incline to think you dangerous,
 ‘ They have their knavish arts to make you so :
 ‘ And then who knows how far their cruelty
 ‘ May carry their revenge !

‘ *Imo.* To every thing

‘ That does belong to you, your friends, and me ;
 ‘ I shall be torn from you, forced away,
 ‘ Helpless and miserable : Shall I live
 ‘ To see that day again ?

‘ *Oro.* That day shall never come.’

Abu. I know you are persuaded to believe
 The governor’s arrival will prevent
 These mischiefs, and bestow your liberty :
 But who is sure of that ? I rather fear
 More mischiefs from his coming. He is young,
 Luxurious, passionate, and amorous :
 Such a complexion, and made bold by pow’r,
 To countenance all he is prone to do,
 Will know no bounds, no law against his lusts.
 If, in a fit of his intemperance,
 With a strong hand he shall resolve to seize,
 And force my royal mistress from your arms,
 How can you help yourself ?

Oro. Ha ! thou hast rous’d

The lion in his den, he stalks abroad,
 And the wide forest trembles at his roar.
 I find the danger now. My spirits start
 At the alarm, and from all quarters come
 To man my heart, the citadel of love.
 Is there a pow’r on earth to force you from me ?
 And shall I not resist it ? ‘ nor strike first,
 ‘ To keep, to save you : to prevent that curse ?
 ‘ ‘ This is your cause, and shall it not prevail ?’
 Oh ! you were born always to conquer me.
 Now I am fashion’d to thy purpose : Speak,
 What combination, what conspiracy,
 Would’st thou engage me in ? I’ll undertake
 All thou would’st have me now for liberty,
 For the great cause of love and liberty.

Abu. Now, my great master, you appear yourself.
 And,

And, since we have you join'd in our design,
It cannot fail us. I have muster'd up
The choicest slaves, men who are sensible
Of their condition, and seem most resolv'd:
They have their several parties.

Oro. Summon 'em,
Assemble 'em: I will come forth and shew
Myself among 'em: If they are resolv'd,
I'll lead their foremost resolutions.

Abo. I have provided those will follow you.

Oro. With this reserve in our proceedings still,
The means that lead us to our liberty
Must not be bloody.

Abo. You command in all.

Oro. We shall expect you, Sir:

Abo. You sha'not long.

[*Exeunt Oro. and Imo. at one door, Aboan at another.*

Weldon coming in before Mrs. Lackitt.

Wid. These unmannerly *Indians* were something unreasonable to disturb us just in the nick, Mr *Weldon*; but I have the Parson within call still, to do us the good turn.

Weld. We had best stay a little I think, to see things settled again, had not we? Marriage is a serious thing you know.

Wid. What do you talk of a serious thing, Mr. *Weldon*? I think you have found me sufficiently serious: I have married my son to your sister, to pleasure you: And now I come to claim your promise to me, you tell me marriage is a serious thing.

Weld. Why, is it not?

Wid. Fiddle, faddle, I know what it is: 'Tis not the first time I have been marry'd, I hope: But I shall begin to think you don't design to do fairly by me, so I shall.

Weld. Why indeed, Mrs. *Lackitt*, I'm afraid I can't do so fairly as I would by you. 'Tis what you must know first or last; and I should be the worst man in the world to conceal it any longer; therefore I must own to you that I am married already.

Wid. Married? You don't say so, I hope! how have
you

you the conscience to tell me such a thing to my face. Have you abus'd me then, fool'd and cheated me? what do you take me for, Mr. *Weldon*? Do you think I am to be serv'd at this rate? But you shan't find me the silly creature you think me: I would have you to know I understand better things than to ruin my son without a valuable consideration. If I can't have you, I can keep my money. Your sister shan't have the catch of him she expected: I won't part with a shilling to 'em.

Weld. You made the match yourself, you know, you can't blame me

Wid. Yes, yes, I can, and do blame you: you might have told me before, you were marry'd.

Weld. I would not have told you now; but you follow'd me so close, I was forc'd to it: Indeed I am marry'd in *England*; but 'tis as if I were not; for I have been parted from my wife a great while, and, to do reason on both sides, we hate one another heartily. Now I did design, and will marry you still, if you'll have a little patience.

Wid. A likely business truly.

Weld. I have a friend in *England* that I will write to, to poison my wife, and then I can marry you with a good conscience; if you love me, as you say you do, you'll consent to that, I'm sure.

Wid. And will he do it, do you think?

Weld. At the first word, or he is not the man I take him to be.

Wid. Well, you are a dear devil, Mr. *Weldon*: And would you poison your wife for me?

Weld. I would do any thing for you.

Wid. Well, I am mightily oblig'd to you. But 'twill be a great while before you can have an answer of your letter.

Weld. 'Twill be a great while indeed.

Wid. In the mean time, Mr. *Weldon*——

Weld. Why in the mean time —— Here's company. We'll settle that within; I'll follow you. [*Exit* *Wid.*]

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. So, Sir, you carry on your business swimmingly: You have stolen a wedding I hear.

Weld.

Weld. Ay, my sister is marry'd: And I am very near being run away with myself.

Stan. The widow will have you then?

Weld. You come very seasonably to my rescue: *Jack Stanmore* is to be had, I hope?

Stan. At half an hour's warning.

Weld. I must advise with you. [Exeunt.]

‘ S C E N E, *The Country.*

‘ *Enter Oroonoko, with Aboan, Hotman, and Slaves.*

‘ *Oro.* Impossible! nothing's impossible:
‘ We know our strength only by being try'd.
‘ If you object the mountains, rivers, woods
‘ Unpassable, that lie before our march:
‘ Woods we can set on fire: We swim by nature:
‘ What can oppose us then but we may tame?
‘ All things submit to virtuous industry:
‘ That we carry with us, that is ours.

‘ *Slav.* Great Sir, we have attended all you said,
‘ With silent joy and admiration:
‘ And, were we only men, would follow such,
‘ So great a leader, thro' the untry'd world.
‘ But, oh! consider we have other names,
‘ Husbands and fathers, and have things more dear
‘ To us than life, our children and our wives,
‘ Unfit for such an expedition:
‘ What must become of them?

‘ *Oro.* We wo'not wrong
‘ The virtue of our women, to believe
‘ There is a wife among them would refuse
‘ To share her husband's fortune. What is hard,
‘ We must make easy to 'em in our love: While we live,
‘ And have our limbs, we can take care of them;
‘ Therefore I still propose to lead our march
‘ Down to the sea, and plant a colony;
‘ Where, in our native innocence, we shall live
‘ Free, and be able to defend ourselves;
‘ Till stress of weather, or some accident,
‘ Provide a ship for us.

‘ *Abo.*

- ' *Abo.* An accident !
 ' The luckiest accident presents itself ;
 ' The very ship that brought and made us slaves,
 ' Swims in the river still. I see no cause
 ' But we may seize on that.
 ' *Oro.* It shall be so :
 ' There is a justice in it pleases me :
 ' Do you agree to it ? [To the Slaves.
 ' *Omnes.* We follow you.
 ' *Oro.* You do not relish it. [To Hotman.
 ' *Hot.* I am afraid
 ' You'll find it difficult and dangerous.
 ' *Abo.* Are you the man to find the dangers first ?
 ' You should have giv'n example. Dangerous !
 ' I thought you had not understood the word ;
 ' You, who would be the head, the hand and heart ;
 ' Sir, I remember you, you can talk well ;
 ' I wo't doubt but you'll maintain your word.
 ' *Oro.* This fellow is not right ; I'll try him further ;
[To Aboan.
 ' The danger will be certain to us all,
 ' And Death most certain in miscarrying.
 ' We must expect no mercy, if we fail :
 ' Therefore our way must be not to expect :
 ' We'll put it out of expectation,
 ' By death upon the place, or liberty.
 ' There is no mean, but death, or liberty.
 ' There's no man here I hope, but comes prepar'd
 ' For all that can befall him.
 ' *Abo.* Death is all :
 ' In most conditions of humanity
 ' To be desir'd, but to be shunn'd by none :
 ' The remedy of many, wish of some,
 ' And certain end of all.
 ' If there be one among us, who can fear
 ' The face of death appearing like a friend,
 ' As in this cause of honour death must be :
 ' How will he tremble when he sees him dress'd
 ' In the wild fury of our enemies,
 ' In all the terrors of their cruelty !

' For

‘ For now, if we should fall into their hands,
 ‘ Could they invent a thousand murd’ring ways,
 ‘ By racking torments, we should feel ’em all.

‘ *Hot.* What will become of us ?

‘ *Oro.* Observe him now. [*To Abo. concerning Hot.*

‘ I could die, altogether, like a man ;
 ‘ As you, and you, and all of us, must do.
 ‘ But who can promise for his bravery
 ‘ Upon the rack ? where fainting, weary life,
 ‘ Hunted thro’ ev’ry limb, is forc’d to feel
 ‘ An agonizing death of all its parts ?
 ‘ Who can bear this ? resolve to be empal’d ?
 ‘ His skin flead off, and roasted yet alive ?
 ‘ The quivering flesh torn from his broken bones
 ‘ By burning pincers ? Who can bear these pains ?

‘ *Hot.* They are not to be borne.

[*Discovering all the confusion of fear.*

‘ *Oro.* You see him now, this man of mighty words !

‘ *Abo.* How his eyes roll !

‘ *Oro.* He cannot hide his fear :

‘ I try’d him this way, and have found him out.

‘ *Abo.* I could not have believ’d it. Such a blaze,

‘ And not a spark of fire !

‘ *Oro.* His violence

‘ Made me suspect : Now I’m convinc’d.

‘ *Abo.* What shall we do with him ?

‘ *Oro.* He is not fit——

‘ *Abo.* Fit ! hang him, he is only fit to be

‘ Just what he is, to live and die a slave :

‘ The base companion of his servile fears,

‘ *Oro.* We are not safe with him.

‘ *Abo.* Do you think so ?

‘ *Oro.* He’ll certainly betray us.

‘ *Abo.* That he shan’t :

‘ I can take care of that : I have a way

‘ To take him off his evidence.

‘ *Oro.* What way ?

‘ *Abo.* I’ll stop his mouth before you, stab him here,

‘ And then let him inform.

‘ [*Going to stab Hotman, Oroonoko holds him.*

C

‘ *Oro.*

‘ *Oro.* Thou art not mad ?

‘ *Abo.* I would secure ourselves.

‘ *Oro.* It sha’not be this way ; nay cannot be :

‘ His murder will alarm all the rest,

‘ Make ’em suspect us of barbarity,

‘ And, may be, fall away from our design.

‘ We’ll not set out in blood. We have, my friends,

‘ This night to furnish what we can provide

‘ For our security and just defence.

‘ If there be one among us we suspect

‘ Of baseness, or vile fear, it will become

‘ Our common care to have an eye on him :

‘ I wo’not name the man.

‘ *Abo.* You guess at him. [To Hotman.

‘ *Oro.* To-morrow, early as the breaking day,

‘ We rendezvous behind the citron grove.

‘ That ship secur’d, we may transport ourselves

‘ To our respective homes : My father’s kingdom

‘ Shall open her wide arms to take you in,

‘ And nurse you for her own, adopt you all,

‘ All, who will follow me.

‘ *Omnes.* All, all follow you.

‘ *Oro.* There I can give you all your liberty :

‘ Bestow its blessings, and secure ’em yours.

‘ There you shall live with honour, as becomes

‘ My fellow-sufferers and worthy friends.

‘ Thus, if we do succeed : But, if we fall

‘ In our attempt, ’tis nobler still to die,

‘ Than drag the galling yoke of slavery.’

[*Exeunt.*

A C T IV.

Enter Weldon and Jack Stanmore.

‘ *Weld.* **Y**OU see, honest *Jack*, I have been industrious for you : You must take some pains now to serve yourself.

‘ *J. Stan.*

' *J. Stan.* Gad, Mr *Weldon*, I have taken a great deal of pains; and, if the Widow speak honestly, faith and troth she'll tell you what a pains-taker I am.

' *Weld.* Fie, fie, not me; I am her husband you know. She won't tell me what pains you have taken with her: Besides, she takes you for me.

' *J. Stan.* That's true: I forgot you had married her. But if you knew all——

' *Weld.* 'Tis no matter for my knowing all, if she does.

' *J. Stan.* Ay, ay, she does know, and more than ever she knew since she was a woman, for the time, I will be bold to say; for I have done——

' *Weld.* The devil take you, for you'll never have done.

' *J. Stan.* As old as she is, she has a wrinkle behind more than she had, I believe; for I have taught her what she never knew in her life before.

' *Weld.* What care I what wrinkles she has? or what you have taught her? If you'll let me advise you, you may: If not, you may prate on, and ruin the whole design.

' *J. Stan.* Well, well, I have done.

' *Weld.* Nobody but your cousin, and you, and I, know any thing of this matter. I have marry'd Mrs. *Lackitt*, and put you to bed to her, which she knows nothing of, to serve you: In two or three days I'll bring it about so, to resign up my claim, and with her consent, quietly to you.

' *J. Stan.* But how will you do it?

' *Weld.* That must be my business: In the mean time, if you should make any noise, 'twill come to her ears, and be impossible to reconcile her.

' *J. Stan.* Nay, as for that, I know the way to reconcile her, I warrant you.

' *Weld.* But how will you get her money? I am marry'd to her.

' *J. Stan.* That I don't know, indeed.

' *Weld.* You must leave it to me, you find; all the pains I shall put you to, will be to be silent: You can hold your tongue for two or three days?

' *J. Stan.* Truly not well, in a matter of this nature:

‘ I should be very unwilling to lose the reputation of this night’s work, and the pleasure of telling it.

‘ *Weld.* You must mortify that vanity a little: You will have time enough to brag and lie of your manhood, when you have her in a bare-fac’d condition to disprove you.

‘ *J. Stan.* Well, I’ll try what I can do: The hopes of her money must do it.

‘ *Weld.* You’ll come at night again? ’Tis your own business.

‘ *J. Stan.* But you have the credit on’t.

‘ *Weld.* ’Twill be our own another day, as the widow says. Send your cousin to me: I want his advice.

‘ *J. Stan.* I want to be recruited, I’m sure; a good breakfast, and to bed: She has rock’d my cradle sufficiently. [Exit.

‘ *Weld.* She would have a husband; and, if all be as he says, she has no reason to complain: But there’s no relying on what men say upon these occasions: They have the benefit of their bragging, by recommending their abilities to other women: Their’s is a trading estate, that lives upon credit, and increases by removing it out of one bank into another. Now poor women have not these opportunities: We must keep our stocks dead by us, at home, to be ready for a purchase, when it comes, a husband, let him be never so dear, and be glad of him: Or venture our fortunes abroad on such rotten security, that the principal and interest, nay, very often, our persons are in danger. If the women would agree (which they never will) to call home their effects, how many proper gentlemen would sneak into another way of living, for want of being responsible in this! then husbands would be cheaper. Here comes the widow, she’ll tell truth; she’ll not bear false witness against her own interest, I know.’

Enter Widow Lackitt.

Weld. Now, Mrs. Lackitt.

Wid. Well, well, *Lackitt*, or what you will now; now I am marry’d to you: I am very well pleas’d with what I have done, I assure you.

Weld.

Weld. And with what I have done too, I hope.

Wid. Ah! Mr. *Weldon*! I say nothing, but you're a dear man, and I did not think it had been in you.

Weld. I have more in me than you imagine.

Wid. No no, you can't have more than I imagine. 'Tis impossible to have more: You have enough for any woman, in an honest way, that I will say for you.

Weld. Then I find you are satisfied.

Wid. Satisfied! No indeed: I'm not to be satisfied with you or without you: To be satisfied is to have enough of you. Now, 'tis a folly to lie, I shall never think I can have enough of you. I shall be very fond of you. Would you have me fond of you? What do you do to me, to make me love you so well?

Weld. Can't you tell what?

Wid. Go, there's no speaking to you: You bring all the blood of one's body into one's face, so you do: Why do you talk so?

Weld. Why, how do I talk?

Wid. You know how: But a little colour becomes me, I believe: How do I look to-day?

Weld. O! most lovingly, most amiably.

Wid. Nay, this can't be long a secret, I find, I shall discover it by my countenance.

Weld. The women will find you out, you look so chearfully.

Wid. But do I, do I really look so chearfully, so amiably? There's no such paint in the world as the natural glowing of a complexion. Let 'em find me out if they please, poor creatures, I pity 'em: They envy me, I'm sure, and would be glad to mend their looks upon the same occasion. The young jill-firting girls, forsooth, believe no body must have a husband but themselves: but I would have them to know there are other things to be taken care of, besides their green-sickness.

Weld. Ay, sure, or the physicians would have but little practice.

Wid. Mr. *Weldon*, what must I call you? I must have some pretty fond name or other for you. What shall I call you?

Weld. I thought you lik'd my own name.

Wid. Yes, yes, I like it, but I must have a nick-name for you: most women have nick-names for their husbands.

Weld. Cuckold.

Wid. No, no, but 'tis very pretty before company; it looks negligent, and is the fashion, you know.

Weld. To be negligent of their husbands, it is, indeed.

Wid. Nay then, I won't be in the fashion; for I can never be negligent of dear Mr. *Weldon*: And, to convince you, here's something to encourage you not to be negligent of me, [*Gives him a purse and a little casket.* five hundred pounds in gold in this; and jewels to the value of five hundred pounds more in this.

[*Weldon opens the casket.*

Weld. Ay, marry, this will encourage me indeed.

Wid. There are comforts in marrying an elderly woman, Mr. *Weldon*. Now a young woman would have fancy'd she had paid you with her person, or had done you the favour.

Weld. What do you talk of young women: You are as young as any of 'em, in every thing but their folly and ignorance.

Wid. And do you think me so? But I have reason to suspect you. Was not I seen at your house this morning, do you think?

Weld. You may venture again: You'll come at night, I suppose.

Wid. O dear! at night? so soon?

Weld. Nay, if you think it so soon—

Wid. O! no, 'tis not for that, Mr. *Weldon*, but—

Weld. You won't come then?

Wid. Won't! I don't say I won't: That is not a word for a wife: If you command me—

Weld. To please yourself.

Wid. I will come to please you.

Weld. To please yourself, own it.

Wid. Well, well, to please myself then. You're the strangest man in the world, nothing can 'scape you; you'll to the bottom of ev'ry thing.

Enter

Enter Daniel, Lucy following.

Dan. What would you have? what do you follow me for?

Luc. Why mayn't I follow you? I must follow you now all the world over.

Dan. Hold you, hold you there: Not so far by a mile or two; I have enough of your company already, by'r lady; and something to spare: You may go home to your brother, an you will; I have no farther to do with you.

Wid. Why, **Daniel*, child, thou art not out of thy wits, sure, art thou?

Dan. Nay, marry, I don't know; but I am very near, I believe: I am alter'd for the worse mightily since you saw me; and she has been the cause of it there.

Wid. How so, child?

Dan. I told you before what would come on't of putting me to bed to a strange woman; but you would not be said nay.

Wid. She is your wife now, child, you must love her.

Dan. Why, so I did, at first.

Wid. But you must love her always.

Dan. Always! I lov'd her as long as I could, mother, and as long as loving was good, I believe; for I find now I don't care a fig for her.

Luc. Why, you lubberly, slovenly, misbegotten blockhead——

Wid. Nay, Mistress *Lucy*, say any thing else, and spare not: But, as to his begetting, that touches me: He is as honestly begotten, tho' I say it, that he is the worse again.

Luc. I see all good nature is thrown away upon you——

Wid. It was so with his father before him: He takes after him.

Luc. And therefore I will use you as you deserve, you tony.

Wid. Indeed he deserves bad enough; but don't call him out of his name: His name is *Daniel*, you know.

Dan. She may call me hermaphrodite if she will; for I hardly know whether I'm a boy or girl.

**Wid.* A boy, I warrant thee, as long as thou liv'st.

'*Dan.* Let her call me what she pleases, mother, 'tis not her tongue that I'm afraid of.

'*Luc.* I will make such a beast of thee, such a cuckold!

'*Wid.* O, pray, no I hope; do nothing rashly Mrs.

'*Lucy.*

'*Luc.* Such a cuckold I will make of thee.

'*Dan.* I had rather be a cuckold than what you would make of me in a week, I'm sure; I have no more manhood left in me already, than there is, saving the mark, in one of my mother's old under petticoats here.

'*Wid.* Sirrah, firrah, meddle with your wife's petticoats, and let your mother's alone, you ungracious bird you. [*Beats him.*]

'*Dan.* Why, is the devil in the woman? What have I said now? Do you know, if you were ask'd, I trow? But you are all of a bundle; ev'n hang together: He that unties you, makes a rod for his own tail; and so he will find it that has any thing to do with you.

'*Wid.* Ay, rogue enough, you shall find it: I have a rod for your tail still.

'*Dan.* No wife, and I care not.'

Wid. I'll swinge you into better manners, you booby.

[*Beats him off, and exit.*]

Weld. You have consummated our project upon him.

Luc. Nay, if I have a limb of the fortune, I care not who has the whole body of the fool.

Weld. That you shall, and a large one I promise you.

Luc. Have you heard the news? They talk of an *English* ship in the river.

Weld. I have heard on't; and am preparing to receive it, as fast as I can.

Luc. There's something the matter too with the slaves, some disturbance or other, I don't know what 'tis.

Weld. So much the better still: We fish in troubled waters: We shall have fewer eyes upon us. Pray go you home, and be ready to assist me in your part of the design.

Luc. I can't fail in mine. [*Exit.*]

Weld. The widow has furnish'd me, I thank her, to carry it on. Now I have got a wife, 'tis high time to think of getting a husband. I carry my fortune about me

me—a thousand pounds in gold and jewels. Let me see—'twill be a considerable trust: And I think I shall lay it out to advantage.

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. So, *Weldon*, *Jack* has told me his success; and his hopes of marrying the Widow by your means.

Weld. I have strain'd a point, *Stanmore*, upon your account, to be serviceable to your family.

Stan. I take it upon my account; and am very much obliged to you. But here we are all in an uproar.

Weld. So they say; what's the matter?

Stan. A mutiny among the slaves: *Oroonoko* is at the head of 'em. Our Governor is gone out with his rascally militia against 'em. What it may come to no body knows.

Weld. For my part, I shall do as well as the rest: But I'm concerned for my sister and cousin, whom I expect in the ship from *England*.

Stan. There's no danger of 'em

Weld. I have a thousand pounds here, in gold and jewels, for my cousin's use, that I would more particularly take care of: 'Tis too great a sum to venture at home; and I would not have her wrong'd of it: therefore, to secure it, I think my best way will be to put it into your own keeping.

Stan. You have a very good opinion of my honesty.

[*Takes the purse and casket.*]

Weld. I have, indeed; if any thing should happen to me, in this bustle, as no body is secure of accidents, I know you will take my cousin into your protection and care; and

Stan. You may be sure on't.

Weld. If you hear she is dead, as she may be, then I desire you to accept of the thousand pounds as a legacy, and token of my friendship; my sister is provided for.

Stan. Why, you amaze me; but you are never the nearer dying, I hope, for making your will?

Weld. Not a jot; but I love to be before-hand with a fortune. If she comes safe, this is not a place for a single woman, you know; pray see her married as soon as you can.

Stan. If she be as handsome as her picture, I can promise her a husband.

Wild. If you like her when you see her, I wish nothing so much as to have you marry her yourself.

Stan. From what I have heard of her, and my engagements to you, it must be her fault if I don't: I hope to have her from your own hand.

Wild. And I hope to give her to you, and all this.

Stan. Ay, ay, hang these melancholy reflections: 'Your generosity has engaged all my services.'

Wild. I always thought you worth making a friend.

Stan. You shan't find your good opinion thrown away upon me: I am in your debt, and shall think so as long as I live. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *The Country.*

Enter on one side of the stage Oroonoko, Aboan, with the Slaves. Imoinda with a bow and quiver; the women, some leading, others carrying their children upon their backs.

Oro. The women with their children fall behind.

Imoinda, you must not expose yourself;
Retire, my love: I almost fear for you.

Imo. I fear no danger; life, or death, I will Enjoy with you.

Oro. My person is your guard.

Abo. 'Now, Sir, blame yourself:' If you had not prevented my cutting his throat, that coward there had not discovered us; he comes now to upbraid you.

Enter on the other side the Governor, talking to Hotman, with his rabble.

Gov. This is the very thing I would have wish'd.
Your honest service to the government [*To Hotman.*]
Shall be rewarded with your liberty.

Abo. His honest service! call it what it is,
His villainy, the service of his fear:
If he pretends to honest services,
Let him stand out, and meet me like a man.

[*Advancing.*]

Oro. Hold, you: and you who come against us, hold:
I charge you in a general good to all.

And

And with I could command you, to prevent
 The bloody havock of the murd'ring sword.
 I would not urge destruction uncompell'd :
 But, if you follow fate, you find it here.
 The bounds are set, the limits of our lives :
 Between us lies the gaping gulph of death,
 To swallow all : Who first advances——

Enter the Captain, with his Crew.

Capt. Here, here, here they are, Governor :
 What, seize upon my ship !
 Come, boys, fall on——

[Advancing first, Oroonoko kills him.]

Oro. Thou art fall'n indeed ;
 Thy own blood be upon thee.

Gov. Rest it there.

He did deserve his death. 'Take him away.'

[The body remov'd.]

You see, Sir, you and those mistaken men
 Must be our witnesses, we do not come
 As enemies, and thirsting for your blood.
 If we desir'd your ruin, the revenge
 Of our companion's death had push'd it on.
 But that we overlook, in a regard
 'To common safety, and the public good.

Oro. Regard that public good ; draw off your men,
 And leave us to our fortune : We're resolv'd.

Gov. Resolv'd ! on what ? your resolutions
 Are broken, overturn'd, prevented, lost :

'What fortune now can you raise out of 'em ?

'Nay, grant we should draw off, what can you do ?

'Where can you move ? What more can you resolve ?

'Unless it be to throw yourselves away.'

Famine must eat you up, if you go on.

You see our numbers could with ease compel

What we request : And what do we request ?

Only to save yourselves.

[The women with their children gathering about the men.]

Oro. I'll hear no more.

'Women. Hear him, hear him, he takes no care of us.'

Gov. To those poor wretches, who have been seduc'd
 And

And led away, to all, and ev'ry one,
We offer a full pardon——

Oro. Then fall on. *[Preparing to engage.]*

Gov. Lay hold upon't, before it be too late,
Pardon and mercy.

[The women clinging about the men, they leave Oroonoko, and fall upon their faces, crying out for pardon.]

Slaves. Pardon, mercy, pardon.

Oro. Let them go all. Now, Governor, I see,
I own the folly of my enterprize,

The rashness of this action; and must blush,
Quite through this veil of night, a whitely shame,
To think I could design to make those free,
Who were by nature slaves; wretches design'd
To be their masters' dogs, and lick their feet.

'Whip, whip 'em to the knowledge of your gods,

'Your Christian gods, who suffer you to be

'Unjust, dishonest, cowardly, and base:

'And give 'em your excuse for being so.'

I would not live on the same earth with creatures,
That only have the faces of their kind:

Why should they look like men, who are not so?

When they put off their noble natures, for

The grov'ling qualities of downcast beasts,

'I wish they had their tails.

'Abo. Then we should know 'em.'

Oro. We were too few before for victory.

We're still enow to die. *[To Imoinda and Aboan.]*

Enter Blandford.

Gov. Live, Royal Sir:

Live, and be happy long on your own terms;

Only consent to yield, and you shall have

What terms you can propose for you and yours.

Oro. Consent to yield! shall I betray myself?

'Gov. Alas! we cannot fear that your small force,

'The force of two, with a weak woman's arms,

'Should conquer us. I speak, in the regard

'And honour of your worth, in my desire

'And forwardness to serve so great a man. —

'I would not have it lie upon my thoughts,

'That

‘ That I was the occasion of the fall
 ‘ Of such a prince, whose courage, carried on
 ‘ In a more noble cause, would well deserve
 ‘ The empire of the world.

‘ *Oro.* You can speak fair.

‘ *Gov.* Your undertaking, tho’ it would have brought
 ‘ So great a loss to us, we must all say
 ‘ Was generous, and noble; and shall be
 ‘ Regarded only as the fire of youth,
 ‘ That will break out sometimes in gallant souls;
 ‘ We’ll think it but the natural impulse,
 ‘ A rash impatience of liberty:
 ‘ No otherwise.

‘ *Oro.* Think it what you will.

‘ I was not born to render an account
 ‘ Of what I do, to any but myself.’

[*Bland. comes forward.*

Bland. I’m glad you have proceeded by fair means.

[*To the Governor.*

I came to be a mediator.

Gov. Try what you can work upon him.

Oro. Are you come against me too?

Bland. Is this to come against you?

[*Offering his sword to Oroonoko.*

Unarm’d to put myself into your hands?

I come, I hope, to serve you.

Oro. You have serv’d me;

I thank you for’t: And I am pleas’d to think

You were my friend, while I had need of one:

But now ’tis past; this farewell, and be gone.

[*Embraces him.*

Bland. It is not past, and I must serve you still.

‘ I would make up these breaches which the sword

‘ Will widen more, and close us all in love.’

Oro. I know what I have done, and I should be
 A child to think they ever can forgive.

Forgive! were there but that, I would not live

To be forgiven: Is there a Power on earth,

That I can ever need forgiveness from?

Bland. You sha’ not need it.

Oro. No, I wo’ not need it.

Bland.

Bland. You see he offers you your own conditions,
For you and yours.

Oro. Must I capitulate?
Precariously compound, on stinted terms,
To save my life?

Bland. Sir, he imposes none.
You make 'em for your own security.
'If your great heart cannot descend to treat,
'In adverse fortune, with an enemy,
'Yet sure your honour's safe, you may accept
'Offers of peace and safety from a friend.'

Gov. He will rely on what you say to him. [*To Bland.*
Offer him what you can; I will confirm
And make all good: Be you my pledge of trust.

Bland. I'll answer with my life for all he says.

Gov. Ay, do, and pay the forfeit if you please. [*Aside.*

Bland. Consider, Sir, can you consent to throw
That blessing from you? you so hardly found, [*Of Imo.*
And so much valu'd once?

Oro. *Imoinda!* Oh!
'Tis she that holds me on this argument
Of tedious life: I could resolve it soon,
Were this curst being only in debate.
But my *Imoinda* struggles in my soul:
She makes a coward of me, I confess:
I am afraid to part with her in death;
And more afraid of life to lose her here.

Bland. This way you must lose her: Think upon
The weakness of her sex, made yet more weak
With her condition, requiring rest,
And soft indulging ease, to nurse your hope,
And make you a glad father.

Oro. There I feel
A father's fondness, and a husband's love.
They seize upon my heart, strain all its strings,
To pull me to 'em from my stern resolve.
Husband and father! all the melting art
Of eloquence lives in those soft'ning names.
Methinks I see the babe, with infant hands,
Pleading for life, and begging to be born.

' Shall

‘ Shall I forbid its birth ; deny him light ?
 ‘ The heavenly comforts of all-cheering light ?
 ‘ And make the womb the dungeon of his death ?
 ‘ His bleeding mother his sad monument ? ’

These are the calls of nature, that call loud ;
 They will be heard, and conquer in their cause :
 He must not be a man who can resist ’em.

No, my *Imoinda* ! I will venture all
 To save thee, and that little innocent :
 The world may be a better friend to him
 Than I have found it. Now I yield myself :

[*Gives up his sword.*

The conflict’s past, and we are in your hands.

[*Several men get about Oroonoko and Aboan,
 and seize them.*

Gov. So you shall find you are. Dispose of them
 As I commanded you.

Bland. Good Heav’n forbid ! you cannot mean —

Gov. This is not your concern.

[*To Blandford, who goes to Oroonoko.*

I must take care of you.

[*To Imoinda.*

Imo. I’m at the end

Of all my care : Here will I die with him. [*Holding Oro.*

Oro. You shall not force her from me. [*He holds her.*

Gov. Then I must. [*They force her from him.*

Try other means, and conquer force by force :

Break, cut off his hold, bring her away.

Imo. I do not ask to live, kill me but here.

Oro. O bloody dogs ! inhuman murderers !

[*Imoinda forc’d out of one door by the Governor and
 others. Oroonoko and Aboan hurried out of an-
 other.*

[*Exeunt.*

A C T V.

Enter Stanmore, Lucy, and Charlotte.

‘ *Stan.* ’ **T**IS strange we cannot hear of him : Can
 ‘ no-body give an account of him ?

‘ *Luc.* Nay, I begin to despair : I give him for gone.

‘ *Stan.*

‘ *Stan.* Not so, I hope.

‘ *Luc.* There are so many disturbances in this devilish country ! Would we had never seen it !

‘ *Stan.* This is but a cold welcome for you, Madam, after so troublesome a voyage.

‘ *Char.* A cold welcome indeed, Sir, without my cousin *Weldon* : He was the best friend I had in the world.

‘ *Stan.* He was a very good friend of yours, indeed, Madam.

‘ *Luc.* They have made him away, murder’d him for his money, I believe ; he took a considerable sum out with him, I know that has been his ruin.

‘ *Stan.* That has done him no injury, to my knowledge : for this morning he put into my custody what you speak of, I suppose—a thousand pounds for the use of this lady.

‘ *Char.* I was always oblig’d to him ; and he has shewn his care of me, in placing my little affairs in such honourable hands.

‘ *Stan.* He gave me a particular charge of you, Madam, very particular, so particular, that you will be surpriz’d when I tell you.

‘ *Char.* What, pray, Sir ?

‘ *Stan.* I am engag’d to get you a husband ; I promised that before I saw you ; and, now I have seen you, you must give me leave to offer you myself.

‘ *Luc.* Nay, cousin, never be coy upon the matter ; to my knowledge, my brother always design’d you for this gentleman.

‘ *Stan.* You hear, Madam, he has given me his interest, and ’tis the favour I would have begg’d of him. Lord ! you are so like him——

‘ *Char.* That you are oblig’d to say you like me for his sake.

‘ *Stan.* I should be glad to love you for your own.’

Char. If I should consent to the fine things you can say to me, how would you look at last, to find ’em thrown away on an old acquaintance ?

Stan. An old acquaintance !

Char.

Char. Lord, how easily are you men to be impos'd upon ! I am no cousin newly arriv'd from *England*, not I ; but the very *Weldon* you wot of.

Stan. Weldon !

Char. Not murder'd, nor made away, as my sister would have you believe ; but am in very good health, your old friend in breeches that was, and now your humble servant in petticoats.

Stan. I am glad we have you again. But what service can you do me in petticoats, pray ?

Char. Can't you tell what ?

Stan. Not I, by my troth : I have found my friend and lost my mistress, it seems, which I did not expect from your petticoats.

Char. Come, come, you have had a friend of your mistress long enough ; 'tis high time now to have a mistress of your friend.

Stan. What do you say ?

Char. I am a woman, Sir.

Stan. A woman !

Char. As arrant a woman as you would have had me but now, I assure you.

Stan. And at my service ?

Char. If you have any for me in petticoats.

Stan. Yes, yes, I shall find you employment.

Char. You wonder at my proceeding, I believe.

Stan. 'Tis a little extraordinary, indeed.

Char. I have taken some pains to come into your favour.

Stan. You might have had it cheaper a great deal.

Char. I might have married you in the person of my *English* cousin, but could not consent to cheat you, even in the thing I had a mind to.

Stan. 'Twas done as you do every thing.

Char. I need not tell you, I made that little plot, and carry'd it on only for this opportunity. I was resolv'd to see whether you lik'd me as a woman, or not : If I had found you indifferent, I would have endeavour'd to have been so too : But you say you like me, and therefore I have ventur'd to discover the truth.

Stan.

Stan. Like you ! I like you so well, that I am afraid you won't think marriage a proof on't : Shall I give you any other ?

Char. No, no, I'm inclin'd to believe you, and that shall convince me. At more leisure I'll satisfy you how I came to be in man's cloaths ; for no ill, I assure you, tho' I have happen'd to play the rogue in 'em. ' They ' have assisted me in marrying my sister, and have gone a ' great way in befriending your cousin *Jack* with the Widow. Can you forgive me for pimping for your family ?'

Enter Jack Stanmore.

Stan. So, *Jack*, what news with you ?

J. Stan. I am the forepart of the Widow you know ; she's coming after with the body of the family, the young 'squire in her hand, my son-in-law that is to be, with the help of Mr. *Weldon*.

Char. Say you so, Sir ? [*Clapping Jack upon the back.*]

Enter Widow Lackitt with her son Daniel.

Wid. So, Mrs. *Lucy*, I have brought him about again ; I have chastis'd him, I have made him as supple as a glove for your wearing, to pull on, or throw off, at your pleasure. Will you ever rebel again ? will you, sirrah ? But come, come, down on your marrow-bones, and ask her forgiveness. [*Daniel kneels.*] Say after me : Pray forsooth wife.

Dan. Pray forsooth wife.

Luc. Well, well, this is a day of good-nature, and so I take you into favour : But first take the oath of allegiance ; [*He kisses her hand, and rises.*] If ever you do so again —

Dan. Nay, marry if I do, I shall have the worst on't.

Luc. Here's a stranger, forsooth, would be glad to be known to you, a sister of mine, pray salute her.

[*Starts at Charlotte.*]

Wid. Your sister, Mrs. *Lucy* ! What do you mean ? This is your brother, Mr. *Weldon* : Do you think I do not know Mr. *Weldon* ?

Luc. Have a care what you say : This Gentleman's about marrying her : You may spoil all.

Wid. Fiddle, faddle ; what ! You would put a trick upon me.

Char.

Char. No faith, Widow, the trick is over; it has taken sufficiently; and now I will teach you the trick, to prevent your being cheated another time.

Wid. How! cheated, Mr. *Weldon*!

Char. Why, aye, you will always take things by the wrong handle: I see you will have me Mr. *Weldon*: I grant you I was Mr. *Weldon* a little while to please you or so: But Mr. *Stanmore* here has persuaded me into a woman again.

Wid. A woman! pray let me speak with you [*Drawing her aside.*] You are not in earnest, I hope? a woman!

Char. Really a woman.

Wid. Gads my life! I could not be cheated in every thing: I know a man from a woman at these years, or the devil is in't. Pray, did not you marry me?

Char. You would have it so.

Wid. And did not I give you a thousand pounds this morning?

Char. Yes, indeed, 'twas more than I deserv'd: But you had your penny-worth for your penny, I suppose: You seem'd to be pleas'd with your bargain.

Wid. A rare bargain I have made on't truly! I have laid out my money to a fine purpose upon a woman.

Char. You would have a husband, and I provided for you as well as I could.

Wid. Yes, yes, you have provided for me.

Char. And you have paid me very well for't; I thank you.

Wid. 'Tis very well: I may be with child too, for aught I know, and may go look for the father.

Char. Nay, if you think so, 'tis time to look about you, indeed. 'Ev'n make up the matter as well as you can, I advise you as a friend, and let us live neighbourly and lovingly together.

Wid. I have nothing else for it that I know of now.'

Char. For my part, Mrs. *Lackitt*, your thousand pounds will engage me not to laugh at you. Then my sister is marry'd to your son; he is to have half your estate, I know; and indeed they may live upon it very comfortably to themselves, and very creditably to you.

Wid.

Wid. Nay, I can blame no body but myself.

Char. You have enough for a husband still, and that you may bestow upon honest *Jack Stanmore*.

Wid. Is he the man then?

Char. He is the man you are oblig'd to.

J. Stan. Yes faith, Widow, I am the man: I have done fairly by you, you find; you know what you have to trust to before hand.

Wid. Well, well, I see you will have me, ev'n marry me, and make an end of the business.

Stan. Why that's well said, now we are all agreed, and all well provided for.

Enter a servant to Stanmore.

Serv. Sir, Mr. *Blandford* desires you to come to him, and bring as many of your friends as you can with you.

Stan. I come to him. You shall all go along with me. Come, young Gentleman, marriage is the fashion, you see, you must like it now.

Dan. If I don't, how shall I help myself?

Luc. Nay, you may hang yourself in the noose, if you please, but you'll never get out on't with struggling.

Dan. Come then, let's e'en jog on in the old road. Cuckold, or worse, I must now be contented: I'm not the first has marry'd and repented. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Governor, with Blandford and Planters.

Bland. Have you no reverence of future fame?
No awe upon your actions, from the tongues,
The cens'ring tongues of men, that will be free?

'If you confess humanity, believe

'There is a God, or devil, to reward

'Our doings here; do not provoke your fate.

'The hand of Heav'n is arm'd against these crimes,

'With hotter thunderbolts, prepar'd to shoot,

'And nail you to the earth, a sad example;

'A monument of faithless infamy.'

*Enter Stanmore, J. Stanmore, Charlotte, Lucy,
Widow, and Daniel.*

So, *Stanmore*, you, I know, the women too,
Will join with me: 'Tis *Oroonoko's* cause,

A lover's

A lover's cause, a wretched woman's cause,
That will become your intercession. [*To the Women.*

1st Plant. Never mind 'em, Governor; he ought to
be made an example for the good of the plantation.

2d Plant. Ay, ay, 'twil frighten the negroes from
attempting the like again.

1st Plant. What, rise gainst their lords and masters!
at this rate no man is safe from his own slaves.

2d Plant. No, no more he is. Therefore, one and
all, Governor, we declare for hanging.

Omn. Plant. Ay, ay, hang him, hang him.

Wid. What! hang him? O forbid it, Governor.

Char. Luc. We all petition for him.

J. Stan. They are for a holiday; guilty, or not, is
not the business, hanging is their sport.

Bland. We are not sure, so wretched, to have these,
The rabble. judge for us: The hanging croud,
The arbitrary guard of Fortune's power,
Who wait to catch the sentence of her frowns,
And hurry all to ruin she condemns.

Stan. So far from farther wrong, that 'tis a shame
He should be where he is. Good Governor,
Order his liberty: He yielded up
Himself, his all, at your discretion.

Bland. Discretion! no, he yielded on your word;
And I am made the cautionary pledge,
The gage and hostage of your keeping it.
Remember, Sir, he yielded on your word;
Your word! which honest men will think should be
The last resort of truth, and trust on earth:
There's no appeal beyond it but to Heav'n:

' An oath is a recognizance to Heav'n,

' Binding us over in the courts above,

' To plead to the indictment of our crimes,

' That those who 'scape this world should suffer there.

' But in the common intercourse of men,

' (Where the dread Majesty is not invoc'd,

' His honour not immediately concern'd,

' Not made a party in our interests),

' Our word is all to be rely'd upon.'

Wid.

Wid. Come, come, you'll be as good as your word, we know.

Stan. He's out of all power of doing any harm now, if he were disposed to it.

Char. But he is not disposed to it.

Bland. To keep him where he is, will make him soon Find out some desperate way to liberty :

He'll hang himself, or dash out his mad brains.

Char. Pray try him by gentle means : We'll all be sureties for him.

Omn. All, all.

Luc. We will all answer for him now.'

Gow. Well, you will have it so, do what you please, just what you will with him, I give you leave.

[*Exit:*

Bland. We thank you, Sir ; this way, pray come with me.

[*Exeunt.*

The SCENE drawn shows Oroonoko upon his back, his legs and arms stretch'd out, and chain'd to the ground.

Enter Blandford, Stanmore, &c.

Bland. O miserable sight ! help every one,
Assist me all to free him from his chains.

[*They help him up and bring him forward, looking down.*

Most injur'd prince ! how shall we clear ourselves ?

We cannot hope you will vouchsafe to hear,

Or credit what we say in the defence

And cause of our suspected innocence.

Stan. We are not guilty of your injuries,

No way consenting to 'em ; but abhor,

Abominate, and loath this cruelty.

Bland. It is our curse, but make it not our crime ;

' A heavy curse upon us, that we must

' Share any thing in common, ev'n the light,

' The elements and seasons, with such men,

' Whose principles, like the fam'd dragons teeth,

' Scatter'd and sown, would shoot a harvest up

' Of fighting mischiefs to confound themselves,

' And ruin all about 'em.

Stan.

‘ *Stan.* Profligates!

‘ Whose bold *Titanian* impiety
 ‘ Would once again pollute their mother earth,
 ‘ Force her to teem with her old monstrous brood
 ‘ Of giants, and forget the race of men.

‘ *Bland.* We are not so: Believe us innocent,
 ‘ We come prepar’d with all our services,
 ‘ To offer a redress of your base wrongs.
 ‘ Which way shall we employ ’em?

‘ *Stan.* Tell us, Sir?

‘ If there is any thing that can atone?
 ‘ But nothing can: that may be some amends’——

Oro. If you would have me think you are not all
 Confederates, all accessory to
 The base injustice of your Governor;
 If you would have me live, as you appear
 Concern’d for me; if you would have me live
 To thank, and bless you, there is yet a way
 To tie me ever to your honest love;
 Bring my *Imoinda* to me; give me her,
 To charm my sorrows, and, if possible,
 I’ll sit down with my wrongs, never to rise
 Against my fate, or think of vengeance more.

Bland. Be satisfy’d, you may depend upon us,
 We’ll bring her safe to you, and suddenly.

Char. We will not leave you in so good a work.

Wid. No, no, we’ll go with you.

Bland. In the mean time
 Endeavour to forget, Sir, and forgive;
 And hope a better fortune.

[*Exeunt.*

Oroonoko alone.

Oro. Forget! forgive! I must indeed forget.
 When I forgive: But while I am a man,
 In flesh, that bears the living marks of shame,
 The print of his dishonourable chains,
 My memory still rousing up my wrongs,
 I never can forgive this Governor,
 This villain; the disgrace of trust, and place,
 And just contempt of delegated power.
 What shall I do? If I declare myself,

I know

I know him, he will sneak behind his guard
 Of followers, and brave me in his fears.
 Else, lion-like, with my devouring rage,
 I would rush on him, fasten on his throat,
 Tear a wide passage to his treacherous heart,
 And that way lay him open to the world. [Pausing.
 If I should turn his Christian arts on him,
 Promise him, speak him fair, flatter and creep
 With fawning steps, to get within his faith,
 I could betray him then, as he has me.
 But am I sure I y that to right myself?
 Lying's a certain mark of cowardice:
 And, when the tongue forgets its honesty,
 The heart and hand may drop their functions too,
 And nothing worthy be resolv'd or done.
 'The man must go together, bad, or good:
 'In one part frail, he soon grows weak in all.
 'Honour should be concern'd in honour's cause,
 'That is not to be cur'd by contraries,
 'As bodies are, whose health is often drawn
 'From rankest poisons.' I let me but find out
 An honest remedy, I have the hand,
 A ministr'ing hand, that will apply it home. [Exit.

S C E N E, *The Governor's House.*

Enter Governor.

Gov. I would not have her tell me, she consents;
 In favour of the sex's modesty,
 That still should be presum'd; because there is
 A greater impudence in owning it,
 Than in allowing all that we can do.
 'This truth I know, and yet against myself
 ' (So unaccountable are lovers ways)
 'I talk, and lose the opportunities,
 'Which love, and she, expects I should employ.
 'Ev'n she expects: 'For when a man has said
 All that is fit, to save the decency,
 The women know the rest is to be done.
 I wo't not disappoint her.

[Going.
Enter

Enter Blandford, the Stanmores, Daniel, Mrs.

Lackitt, Charlotte, and Lucy.

Wid. O Governor! I'm glad we've lit upon you.

Gov. Why! what's the matter?

Char. Nay, nothing extraordinary. But one good action draws on another. You have given the prince his freedom: now we come a begging for his wife: you won't refuse us.

Gov. Refuse you! No, no, what have I to do to refuse you?

Wid. You won't refuse to send her to him, she means.

Gov. I send her to him!

Wid. We have promis'd him to bring her.

Gov. You do very well; 'tis kindly done of you; Ev'n carry her to him, with all my heart.

Luc. You must tell us where she is.

Gov. I tell you! why, don't you know?

Bland. Your servant says she's in the house.

Gov. No, no, I brought her home at first, indeed; but I thought it would not look well to keep her here; I remov'd her in the hurry only to take care of her. What! she belongs to you: I have nothing to do with her.

Char. But where is she now, sir?

Gov. Why, faith, I can't say certainly: you'll hear of her at *Parham* house, I suppose: there or thereabouts: I think I sent her there.

Bland. I'll have an eye on him [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt all but the Governor.*]

Gov. I have ly'd myself into a little time,
And must employ it: 'they'll be here again;
' But I must be before 'em.'

[*Going out, he meets Imoinda, and seizes her.*]

Are you come?

I'll court no longer for a happiness
That is in my own keeping: you may still
Refuse to grant, so I have power to take.
The man that asks deserves to be deny'd.

[*She disengages one hand, and draws his sword from his side upon him: Governor starts and retires; Blandford enters behind him.*]

D

Imo.

Imo. He does indeed, that asks unworthily.

Bland. You hear her, sir, that asks unworthily.

Gov. You are no judge.

Bland. I am of my own slave.

Gov. Be gone and leave us.

Bland. When you let her go.

Gov. To fasten upon you.

Bland. I must defend myself.

Imo. Help, murder, help!

[*Imoinda retires towards the door, favour'd by Blandford; when they are closed, she throws down the sword, and runs out. Governor takes up his sword, they fight, close, and fall, Blandford upon him. Servants enter, and part them.*

Gov. She sha'not 'scape me so. - I've gone too far,
Not to go farther. Curse on my delay:
But yet she is, and shall be in my power.

Bland. Nay, then it is the war of honesty;
I know you, and will save you from yourself.

Gov. All come along with me.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E *the last.*

Enter Oroonoko.

Oro. To honour bound! and yet a slave to love!
I am distracted by their rival powers,
And both will be obey'd. O great revenge!
'Thou raiser and restorer of fall'n fame!
Let me not be unworthy of thy aid,
For stopping in thy course: I still am thine;
But can't forget I am *Imoinda's* too.
She calls me from my wrongs to rescue her.
No man condemn me, who has never felt
A woman's power, or try'd the force of love:
' All tempers yield and soften in those fires:
' Our honours, interests resolving down,
' Run in the gentle current of our joys;
' But not to sink, and drown our memory;
' We mount again to action, like the sun,
' That rises from the bosom of the sea,

' To

' To run his glorious race of light a-new,
' And carry on the world.' Love, love will be
My first ambition, and my fame the next.

Enter Aboan bloody.

My eyes are turn'd against me and combine
With my sworn enemies, to represent
This spectacle of horror. *Aboan!*

' My ever faithful friend !'

Abo. I have no name

That can distinguish me from the vile earth,
To which I'm going: a poor abject worm,
That crawl'd awhile upon the bustling world,
And now am trampled to my dust again.

Oro. I see thee gash'd and mangled.

Abo. Spare my shame.

To tell how they have us'd me: but believe
The hangman's hand would have been merciful.
Do not you scorn me, sir, to think I can
Intend to live under this infamy.

I do not come for pity, to complain.

I've spent an honourable life with you.

The earliest servant of your rising fame,

And would attend it with my latest care :

My life was yours, and so shall be my death.

You must not live,

Bending and sinking, I have dragg'd my steps

Thus far to tell you that you cannot live :

To warn you of those ignominious wrongs,

Whips, rods, and all the instruments of death,

Which I have felt, and are prepar'd for you.

This was the duty that I had to pay.

'Tis done, and now I beg to be discharg'd.

Oro. What shall I do for thee?

Abo. My body tires,

And wo't not bear me off to liberty :

I shall again be taken, made a slave.

A sword, a dagger yet would rescue me.

I have not strength to go and find out death,

You must direct him to me.

Oro. Here he is,

[Gives him a dagger.

The only present I can make thee now :
And, next the honourable means of life,
I would bestow the honest means of death.

Abo. I cannot stay to thank you. If there is
A being after this, I shall be yours
In the next world, your faithful slave again.
This is to try. [*Stabs himself.*] I had a living sense
Of all your royal favours, but this last
Strikes through my heart. I wo'not say farewell,
For you must follow me. [*Dies.*]

Oro. In life and death,
The guardian of my honour ! Follow thee !
I should have gone before thee : then perhaps
Thy fate had been prevented. All his care
Was to preserve me from the barbarous rage
That worry'd him, only for being mine.
Why, why, you Gods ! why am I so accus'd,
That it must be a reason of your wrath,
A guilt, a crime sufficient to the fate
Of any one, but to belong to me ?
My friend has found it out, and my wife will soon :
My wife ! the very fear's too much for life.
I can't support it. Where ? *Imoinda* ! Oh !

[*Going out, she meets him, running into his arms.*]
Thou bosom softness ! Down of all my cares !
I could recline my thoughts upon this breast
To a forgetfulness of all my griefs,
And yet be happy : but it wo'not be,
Thou art disorder'd, pale, and out of breath !
If fate pursues thee, find a shelter here.
What is it thou would'it tell me ?

Imo. 'Tis in vain to call him villain.

Oro. Call him Governor : is it not so ?

Imo. There's not another sure.

Oro. Villain's the common name of mankind here,
But his most properly. What ! what of him ?
I fear to be resolv'd, and must enquire.
He had thee in his power.

Imo. I blush to think it.

Oro. Blush ! to think what ?

Imo.

Imo. That I was in his power.

Oro. He cou'd not use it?

Imo. What can't such men do?

Oro. But did he, durst he?

Imo. What he cou'd, he dar'd.

Oro. His own Gods damn him then? For ours have
none,

No punishment for such unheard of crime.

Imo. 'This monster, cunning in his flatteries,
When he had weary'd all his useless arts,
Leap'd out, fierce as a beast of prey, to seize me.
I trembled, fear'd.

Oro. I fear and tremble now.

What could preserve thee? What deliver thee?

Imo. That worthy man, you us'd to call your friend.

Oro. Blandford?

Imo. Came in, and sav'd me from his rage.

Oro. He was a friend indeed, to rescue thee!

And, for his sake, I'll think it possible

A Christian may be yet an honest man.

Imo. O did you know what I have struggled thro',
To save me yours, sure you would promise me
Never to see me forc'd from you again.

Oro. To promise thee! O! do I need to promise?
But there is now no farther use of words.
Death is security for all our fears.

[*Shows Aboan's body on the floor.*]

And yet I cannot trust him.

Imo. Aboan!

Oro. Mangled and torn, resolv'd to give me time
'To fit myself for what I must expect,
Groan'd out a warning to me, and expir'd.

Imo. For what you must expect?

Oro. Would that were all!

Imo. What to be butcher'd thus —

Oro. Just as thou seest.

Imo. By barb'rous hands to fall at last their prey?

Oro. I have run the race with honour, shall I now
Lag, and be overtaken at the goal?

Imo. No.

Oro. I must look back to thee.

[*Tenderly.*

Imo. You sha'not need.

I am always present to your purpose, say,
Which way would you dispose me?

' *Oro.* Have a care.

' Thou'rt on a precipice, and dost not see
' Whither that question leads thee. O! too soon

' Thou dost enquire what the assembled Gods

' Have not determin'd, and will latest doom.

' Yet this I know of fate, this is most certain,

' I cannot, as I would, dispose of thee;

' And, as I ought, I dare not. O *Imoinda!*

' *Imo.* Alas! that sigh! why do you tremble so!

' Nay, then 'tis bad indeed, if you can weep.

' *Oro.* My heart runs over, if my gushing eyes

' Betray a weakness which they never knew.

' Believe, thou only, thou couldst cause these tears:

' 'The Gods themselves conspire with faithless men

' To our destruction.

' *Imo.* Heav'n and earth our foes!

' *Oro.* It is not always granted to the great

' To be most happy: if the angry pow'rs

' Repent their favours, let 'em take 'em back:

' The hopes of empire, which they gave my youth,

' By making me a prince, I here resign.

' Let 'em quench in me all those glorious fires,

' Which kindled at their beams: that lust of fame,

' That fever of ambition, restless still,

' And burning with the sacred thirst of sway,

' Which they inspir'd, to qualify my fate,

' And makes me fit to govern under them,

' Let 'em extinguish. I submit myself

' To their high pleasure, and devoted bow

' Yet lower, to continue still a slave;

' Hopeless of liberty: and, if I could

' Live after it, would give up honour too,

' To satisfy their vengeance, to avert

' This only curse, the curse of losing thee.

' *Imo.* If Heav'n could be appeas'd, these cruel
' men

' Atc

- ' Are not to be intreated or believ'd :
 ' O ! think on that, and be no more deceiv'd.
 ' *Oro.* What can we do ?
 ' *Imo.* Can I do any thing ?
 ' *Oro.* But we were born to suffer.
 ' *Imo.* Suffer both,
 ' Both die, and so prevent 'em.
 ' *Oro.* By thy death !
 ' O ! let me hunt my travell'd thoughts again ;
 ' Range the wide waite of desolate despair ;
 ' Start any hope. Alas ! I lose myself,
 ' 'Tis pathless, dark, and barren all to me.
 ' Thou art my only guide, my light of life,
 ' And thou art leaving me : Send out thy beams
 ' Upon the wing ; let 'em fly all around,
 ' Discover every way : Is there a dawn,
 ' A glimmering of comfort ? The great God,
 ' That rises on the world, must shine on us.
 ' *Imo.* And see us set before him.
 ' *Oro.* Thou bespeak'st,
 ' And goest before me.
 ' *Imo.* So I would in love,
 ' In the dear unsuspected part of life,
 ' In death for love. Alas ! what hopes for me ?
 ' I was preserv'd but to acquit myself,
 ' To beg to die with you.
 ' *Oro.* And can'st thou ask it ?
 ' I never durst enquire into myself
 ' About thy fate, and thou resolv'st it all.
 ' *Imo.* Alas ! my lord ! my fate's resolv'd in yours.
 ' *Oro.* O ! keep thee there : Let not thy virtue shrink
 ' From my support, and I will gather strength,
 ' Fast as I can, to tell thee —
 ' *Imo.* I must die :
 ' I know 'tis fit, and I can die with you.
 ' *Oro.* O ! thou hast banish'd hence a thousand fears,
 ' Which sicken'd at my heart, and quite unmann'd me.
 ' *Imo.* Your fears for me ; I know you fear my strength,
 ' And could not overcome your tenderness,
 ' To pass this sentence on me : And indeed

There

‘ There you were kind, as I have always found you ;
 ‘ As you have ever been : For tho’ I am
 ‘ Religu’d, and ready to obey my doom,
 ‘ Methinks it should not be pronounc’d by you.

‘ *Oro.* O ! that was all the labour of my grief.
 ‘ My heart and tongue forsook me in the strife ;
 ‘ I never could pronounce it.

‘ *Imo.* I have for you, for both of us.

‘ *Oro.* Alas ! for me ! my death
 ‘ I could regard as the last scene of life,
 ‘ And act it thro’ with joy, to have it done.
 ‘ But then to part with thee——

‘ *Imo.* ’Tis hard to part.

‘ But parting thus, as the most happy must,
 ‘ Parting in death, makes it the easier.
 ‘ You might have thrown me off, forsaken me,
 ‘ And my misfortunes : That had been a death
 ‘ Indeed of terror, to have trembled at.

‘ *Oro.* Forsaken ! thrown thee off !

‘ *Imo.* But ’tis a pleasure more than life can give,
 ‘ That with unconquer’d passion, to the last,
 ‘ You struggle still, and fain would hold me to you.

‘ *Oro.* Ever, ever, and let those stars, which are my
 ‘ enemies,

‘ Witness against me in the other world,
 ‘ If I would leave this mansion of my bliss,
 ‘ To be the brightest ruler of their skies.
 ‘ O ! that we could incorporate, be one, [*Embracing her.*
 ‘ One body, as we have been long one mind ;
 ‘ That, blended so, we might together mix,
 ‘ And, losing thus our being to the world,
 ‘ Be only found to one another’s joys.

‘ *Imo.* Is this the way to part ?

‘ *Oro.* Which is the way ?

‘ *Imo.* The god of love is blind, and cannot find it.
 ‘ But quick make haste, our enemies have eyes,
 ‘ To find us out, and shew us the worst way
 ‘ Of parting. Think on them.

‘ *Oro.* Why dost thou wake me ?

‘ *Imo.* O ! no more of love.

For,

‘ For, if I listen to you, I shall quite

‘ Forget my dangers, and desire to live.

‘ I can’t live yours. *[Takes up the dagger.]*

Oro. ‘ There all the stings of death

‘ Are shot into my heart’—what shall I do ?

Imo. This dagger will instruct you. *[Gives it him.]*

Oro. Ha ! this dagger !

Like fate, it points me to the horrid deed.

Imo. Strike, strike it home, and bravely save us both.
There is no other safety.

Oro. It must be——

But first a dying kiss——

[Kisses her.]

This last embrace——

[Embracing her.]

And now——

Imo. I’m ready.

Oro. O ! where shall I strike ?

Is there a smallest grain of that lov’d body
That is not dearer to me than my eyes,
My bosom’d heart, and all the life blood there ?
Bid me cut off these limbs, ‘hew off these hands,
Dig out these eyes, tho’ I would keep them last
To gaze upon thee : But to murder thee !
The joy, and charm of ev’ry ravish’d sense,
My wife ! forbid it, nature.

Imo. ‘Tis your wife,
Who on her knees conjures you. O ! in time
Prevent those mischiefs that are falling on us.
You may be hurry’d to a shameful death,
And I too dragg’d to the vile governor ;
Then I may cry aloud : When you are gone,
Where shall I find a friend again to save me ?

Oro. It will be so. Thou unexampled virtue !
Thy resolution has recover’d mine :
And now prepare thee.

Imo. Thus, with open arms,
I welcome you and death.

[He drops his dagger, as he looks on her, and throws himself on the ground.]

Oro. I cannot bear it.

‘ O let me dash against the rock of fate,

Dig

Dig up this earth, tear her bow ls out,
 To make a grave, deep as the center down,
 To swallow wide and bury us together,
 It wo't be. O! then some pitying god
 (If there be one, a friend to innocence)
 Find yet a way to lay her beauties down
 Gently in death, and save me from her blood.

Imo. O rise, 'tis more than death to see you thus,
 I'll ease your love, and do the deed myself—

[She takes up the dagger, he rises in haste to take it from her.]

Oro. O! hold, I charge thee, hold.

Imo. Tho' I must own

It would be nobler for us both from you.

Oro. O! for a whirlwind's wing to hurry us
 To yonder cliff, which frowns upon the flood;
 That in embraces lock'd we might plunge in,
 And perish thus in one another's arms.

Imo. Alas! what shout is that?

Oro. I see 'em coming.

They sha'not overtake us. This last kiss,
 And now farewell.

Imo. Farewel, farewell for ever.

Oro. I'll turn my face away, and do it so.
 Now, are you ready?

Imo. Now. But do not grudge me
 The pleasure in my death of a last look;
 Pray look upon me.—Now I'm satisfied.

Oro. So fate must be by this.

[Going to stab her, he stops short; she lays her hand on his, in order to give the blow.]

Imo. Nay, then I must assist you.

And, since it is the common cause of both,
 'Tis just that both should be employ'd in it.
 Thus, thus 'tis finish'd, and I bless my fate, *[Stabs herself.]*
 That, where I liv'd, I die in these lov'd arms. *[Dies.]*

Oro. She's gone. And now all's at an end with me,
 Soft, lay her down, O we will part no more.

[Then throws himself by her.]

But let me pay the tribute of my grief,

OROONOKO.



G. Kneller del.

G. Kneller sculp.

MR. SAVIGNY in the Character of OROONOKO.

Oro. I'll turn my Face away, and do it so.

Published Decr 23 1776 by J. Dondos & Partners



A few sad tears to thy lov'd memory,
 And then I follow — [abouts] [Weeps over her.
 But I stay too long. [A noise again.

The noise comes nearer. Hold, before I go,
 There's something would be done. It shall be so,
 And then, *Imoinda*, I'll come all to thee. [Rises.

[Blandford and his party enter before the Governor and his party; swords drawn on both sides.

Gov. You strive in vain to save him, he shall die.

Bland. Not while we can defend him with our lives.

Gov. Where is he?

Oro. Here is the wretch whom you would have.

Put up your swords, and let not civil broils

Engage you in the cursed cause of one

Who cannot live, and now intreats to die.

This object will convince you

Bland. 'Tis his wife. [They gather about the body.

Alas! there was no other remedy.

Gov. Who did this bloody deed?

Oro. The deed was mine:

Bloody I know it is, and I expect

Your laws should tell me so. Thus, self-condemn'd,

I do resign myself into your hands,

The hands of justice———But I hold the sword

For you———and for myself.

[Stabs the Governor and himself, then throws himself by *Imoinda's* body.

Stan. He has kill'd the Governor and slabb'd himself.

Oro. 'Tis as it should be now, I have sent his ghost
 To be a witness of that happiness

In the next world, which he deny'd us here. [Dies.

Bland. I hope there is a place of happiness

In the next world for such exalted virtue.

Pagan or unbeliever, yet he liv'd

To all he knew: And, if he went astray,

There's mercy still above to set him right.

But Christians, guided by the heav'nly ray,

Have no excuse if we mistake our way. [Exeunt Omnes.

E P I L O G U E.

YOU see we try all shapes, and shifts, and arts,
 To tempt your favours, and regain your hearts.
 We weep and laugh, join mirth and grief together,
 Like rain and sunshine mix'd, in April weather.
 Your diff'rent tastes divide our poet's cares;
 One foot the sock, t'other the buskins wears.
 Thus, while he strives to please, he's forc'd to do't,
 Like Volscius, hip hop, in a single boot.
 Critics, he knows, for this may damn his books:
 But he makes feasts for friends, and not for cooks.

Tho' errant knights of late no favour find,
 Sure you will be to ladies errant kind.
 To follow fame, knight errants make profession:
 We damsels fly to save our reputation:
 So they their valour shew, we our discretion.
 To lands of monsters and fierce beasts they go:
 We, to these islands, where rich husbands grow:
 Tho' they're no monsters, we may make them so.
 If they're of English growth, they'll bear't with patience:
 But save us from a spouse of Oroonoko's nations:
 Then bless your stars, you happy London wives,
 Who love at large, each day, yet keep your lives:
 Nor envy poor Imoinda's doating blindness,
 We thought her husband kill'd her out of kindness.
 Death with a husband ne'er had shewn such charms,
 Had she once dy'd within a lover's arms.
 Her error was from ignorance proceeding;
 Poor soul! she wanted some of our town-breeding.
 Forgive this Indian fondness of her spouse;
 Their law no Christian liberty allows:
 Alas! they make a conscience of their vows!
 If virtue in a Heathen be a fault;
 Then damn the Heathen school where she was taught.
 She might have learn'd to cuckold, jilt, and sham,
 Had Covent-Garden been in Surinam.

THE
LONDON MERCHANT;
OR, THE
H I S T O R Y
O F
GEORGE BARNWELL.
A
T R A G E D Y,

WRITTEN
BY MR. L I L L O.
MARKED WITH THE
VARIATIONS IN THE MANAGER'S BOOK,
AT THE
Theatre-Royal, in Drury-Lane.

LEARN TO BE WISE BY OTHERS HARM,
AND YOU SHALL DO FULL WELL.

Old Ballad of the Lady's Fall.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR S. BLADON, W. NICOLL, AND
W. LOWNDES.

M, DCC, LXXXVIII.

*** The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as at Line 16 to 26, in Page 6.

P R O L O G U E.

THE Tragic Muse, sublime, delights to shew
 Princes distress'd, and scenes of Royal woe;
 In awful pomp, majestic, to relate
 The fall of nations, or some hero's fate:
 That scepter'd chiefs may, by example, know
 The strange vicissitudes of things below;
 What dangers on security attend;
 How pride and cruelty in ruin end:
 Hence Providence supreme to know, and own
 Humanity adds glory to a throne.

In ev'ry former age, and foreign tongue,
 With native grandeur thus the goddess sung.
 Upon our stage, indeed, with wish'd success,
 You've sometimes seen her in an humbler dress;
 Great only in distress. When she complains
 In Southern's, Rowe's, or Otway's moving strains,
 The brilliant drops that fall from each bright eye,
 The absent pomp, with brighter gems, supply.

Forgive us, then, if we attempt to shew,
 In artless strains, a tale of private woe.
 A London 'prentice ruin'd is our theme,
 Drawn from the fam'd old song that bears his name.
 We hope your taste is not so high, to scorn
 A moral tale esteem'd ere you were born;
 Which, for a century of rolling years,
 Has fill'd a thousand thousand eyes with tears.

If thoughtless youth to warn, and shame the age
 From vice destructive, well becomes the stage;
 If this example innocence ensures,
 Prevents our guilt, or by reflection cures;
 If Millwood's dreadful crimes, and sad despair,
 Commend the virtue of the good and fair;
 Tho' art be wanting, and our numbers fail,
 Indulge the attempt, in justice to the tale.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Therowgood
Barnwell, *Uncle* to George,
George Barnwell;
Trueman,
Blunt,

At Covent Garden.
Mr. HULL.
Mr. FEARON.
Mr. FARREN.
Mr. DAVIS.
Mr. THOMPSON.

At Dury Lane.
Mr. PACKER.
Mr. CHAPLIN.
Mr. BANNISTER.
Mr. BARRYMORE.
Mr. BURTON.

WOMEN.

Maria,
Millwood,
Lucy,

Mrs. T. KENNEDY.
Mrs. BATES.
Mrs. WILSON.

Mrs. KEMBLE.
Mrs. WILSON.
Mrs. WARD.

Officers, with their Attendants, Keeper, and Footmen.

SCENE LONDON, and an adjacent Village.

GEORGE BARNWELL.

ACT I. SCENE, *a room in Thorowgood's house.*

Enter Thorowgood and Trueman.

Trueman. SIR, the packet from Genoa is arrived. [*Gives letters.*]

Thor. Heaven be praised! The storm that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty, and laws, is for a time diverted. The haughty and revengeful Spaniard, disappointed of the loan on which he depended from Genoa, must now attend the slow returns of wealth from his new world, to supply his empty coffers, ere he can execute his proposed invasion of our happy island. By this means time is gained to make such preparations on our part, as may, Heaven concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

Tr. He must be insensible indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned. Sir, may I know by what means? ——— If I am too bold —

Thor. Your curiosity is laudable; and I gratify it with the greater pleasure, because from thence you may learn how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession, you may, with honest scorn, reject whatever is unworthy of it.

Tr. Should Barnwell, or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honourable name, we must be left without excuse.

Thor. You compliment, young man. [*Tr. bows respectfully.*] Nay, I'm not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him; only take heed not to purchase the character of complaisant at the expence of your sincerity. But to answer your question: The

bank of Genoa had agreed, at an excessive interest, and on good security, to advance the king of Spain a sum of money sufficient to equip his vast armada; of which our peerless Elizabeth (more than in name the mother of her people) being well informed, sent Walsingham, her wife and faithful secretary, to consult the merchants of this loyal city; who all agreed, to direct their several agents to influence, if possible, the Genoese to break their contract with the Spanish court. 'Tis done; the state and bank of Genoa having maturely weighed, and rightly judged of their true interest, prefer the friendship of the merchants of London to that of the monarch, who proudly styles himself king of both Indies.

Tr. Happy success of prudent counsels! What an expence of blood and treasure is here saved! 'Excellent queen; Oh, how unlike those princes, who make the danger of foreign enemies a pretence to oppress their subjects by taxes great, and grievous to be borne.

Thor. Not so our gracious queen! whose richest exchequer is her people's love, as their happiness her greatest glory.

Tr. On these terms to defend us, is to make our protection a benefit worthy her who confers it, and well worth our acceptance.' Sir, have you any commands for me at this time?

Thor. Only look carefully over the files, to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid; if there are, send and discharge 'em. We must not let artificers lose their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance. [*Exit Trueman.*

Enter Maria.

Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in some measure worthy the guests. Let there be plenty, and of the best, that the courtiers may at least commend our hospitality.

Ma. Sir, I have endeavoured not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-timed parsimony.

Thor. Nay, 'twas a needless caution: I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

Ma.

Ma. Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation. I should but increase the number of the company, without adding to their satisfaction.

Thor. Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

Ma. Company will but increase it. I wish you would dispense with my presence. Solitude best suits my present temper.

Thor. You are not insensible, that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honour so frequently to grace my board. Should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent of their condescension, and think their labour lost.

Ma. He that shall think his time or honour lost in visiting you, can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is, that she is your's. The man of quality who chuses to converse with a gentleman and merchant of your worth and character, may confer honour by so doing, but he loses none.

Thor. Come, come, Maria, I need not tell you, that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, and yet intend me no disrespect at all; for though he may lose no honour in my company, 'tis very natural for him to expect more pleasure in your's. I remember the time when the company of the greatest and wisest man in the kingdom would have been insipid and tiresome to me, if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's

Ma. Your's, no doubt, was as agreeable to her; for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where 'tis mutual.

Thor. Thou knowest I have no heir, no child, but thee; the fruits of many years successful industry must all be thine. Now it would give me pleasure, great as my love, to see on whom you will bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit for leave to address you; but I have hitherto declined it, in hopes that, by observation, I should learn which way your inclination tends; for, as I know love to be essential to happiness in the marriage state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it.

Ma. What can I say? How shall I answer as I ought, this tenderness, so uncommon even in the best of parents? But you are without example; yet, had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the crowd of courtiers that visit here, with equal esteem, but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess; yet, had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obeyed, I had submitted, and to my duty sacrificed my peace.

Thor. From your perfect obedience in every other instance, I feared as much; and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned.

Ma. Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not; but I find high birth and titles don't recommend the man who owns them to my affections.

Thor. I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, though they make not a bad man good, yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light.

Ma. I cannot answer for my inclinations; but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority. And as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, love shall never make me act contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire?

Thor. I'll see you to your chamber. [Exeunt,

SCENE, a room in Millwood's house.

Enter Millwood and Lucy.

Mill. How do I look to-day, Lucy?

Lucy. O, killingly, madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible!——But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion? What new conquest are you aiming at?

Mill. A conquest would be new indeed!

Lucy. Not to you, who make 'em every day---but
to

to me——Well, 'tis what I'm never to expect——
unfortunate as I am——But your wit and beauty----

Mill. First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous and sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us; we are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them, but as we contribute to their satisfaction.

Lucy. You are certainly, madam, on the wrong side in this argument. Is not the expence all theirs? And I am sure, it is our own fault if we han't a share of the pleasure.

Mill. We are but slaves to men.

Lucy. Nay, 'tis they that are slaves, most certainly, for we lay them under contribution.

Mill. Slaves have no property; no, not even in themselves: all is the victor's.

Lucy. You are strangely arbitrary in your principles, madam.

Mill. I would have my conquests complete, like those of the Spaniards in the new world; who first plundered the natives of all the wealth they had, and then condemned the wretches to the mines for life, to work for more.

Lucy. Well, I shall never approve of your scheme of government: I should think it much more politic, as well as just, to find my subjects an easier employment.

Mill. It is a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honour or honesty, is capable of any action, though never so vile: and yet what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinion? Then, is it not just the villains, to their cost, should find us so? But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex, who, having never injured women, apprehend no danger from them.

Lucy. Aye, they must be young indeed!

Mill. Such a one, I think, I have found. As I have passed through the city, I have often observed him re-

ceiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence.

Lucy. Is he handsome?

Mill. Aye, aye, the stripling is well made, and has a good face.

Lucy. About——

Mill. Eighteen.

Lucy. Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen? You'll be vastly happy. Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

Mill. If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him, and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and gazing wishfully on his face, asked his name. He blushed, and, bowing very low, answered, George Barnwell. I begged his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him that he was the person I had long wished to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate, at a proper time and place. He named a tavern: I talked of honour and reputation, and invited him to my house. He swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him.

[*Knocking at the door.*] Somebody knocks. D'ye hear, I'm at home to nobody to-day but him. [*Exit Lucy.*]

Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence; and I am strangely mistaken, if this does not prove of great importance to me, and him too, before I have done with him. Now, after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider—What manner of person am I to receive? He is young, innocent, and bashful; therefore I must take care not to put him out of countenance at first. 'But then, if I have any skill in physiognomy, he is amorous, and with a little assistance will soon get the better of his modesty.' I'll e'en trust to nature, who does wonders in these matters. 'If to seem what one is not, in order to be the better liked for what one really is; if to speak one thing, and mean the direct contrary, be art in woman——I know nothing of nature.'

Enter

Enter Barnwell, bowing very low, Lucy at a distance.

Mill. Sir, the surprise and joy!

Barn. Madam!

Mill. This is such a favour—— [*Advancing.*

Barn. Pardon me, madam!

Mill. So unhop'd for! [*Still advances.*

[*Barnwell salutes her, and retires in confusion.*

To see you here----Excuse the confusion---

Barn. I fear I am too bold.

Mill. Alas, Sir, I may justly apprehend you think me so. Please, Sir, to sit. I am as much at a loss how to receive this honour as I ought, as I am surpris'd at your goodness in conferring it.

Barn. I thought you had expected me: I promised to come.

Mill. That is the more surprising: few men are such religious observers of their word.

Barn. All who are honest are.

Mill. To one another; but we simple women are seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in their remembrance.

[*Laying her hand on his, as by accident.*

Barn. Her disorder is so great, she don't perceive she has laid her hand on mine. Heavens! how she trembles! What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Mill. The interest I have in all that relates to you (the reason of which you shall know hereafter) excites my curiosity; and were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular subject.

Barn. Madam, you may command my poor thoughts on any subject. I have none that I would conceal.

Mill. You'll think me bold.

Barn. No, indeed.

Mill. What then are your thoughts of love?

Barn. If you mean the love of women, I have not thought of it at all. My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet. But if you mean the general love we owe to mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself. I don't know that person in the world, whose happiness I don't wish.

and wou'dn't promote, were it in my power. In an especial manner I love my uncle, and my master; but above all, my friend.

Mill. You have a friend then, whom you love?

Barn. As he does me, sincerely.

Mill. He is, no doubt, often blest'd with your company and conversation.

Barn. We live in one house, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

Mill. Happy, happy youth! Whoe'er thou art, I envy thee; 'and so must all who see and know this youth.' What have I lost by being formed a woman! I hate my sex, myself. Had I been a man, I might, perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it is: but as it is---Oh!----

Barn. I never observed woman before; or this is, sure, the most beautiful of her sex. [*Aside.*] You seem disordered, madam!--May I know the cause?

Mill. Do not ask me---I can never speak it, whatever is the cause. I wish for things impossible. I would be a servant, bound to the same master, to live in one house with you.

Barn. How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are! and the effect they have on me is as strange. I feel desires I never knew before. I must be gone, while I have power to go. [*Aside.*] Madam, I humbly take my leave.

Mill. You will not, sure, leave me so soon!

Barn. Indeed I must.

Mill. You cannot be so cruel! I have prepared a poor supper, at which I promised myself your company.

Barn. I am sorry I must refuse the honour you designed me: but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service. He is so gentle, and so good a master, that should I wrong him, though he might forgive me, I should never forgive myself.

Mill. Am I refused by the first man, the second favour I ever stooped to ask? Go then, thou proud hard-hearted youth; but know, you are the only man that could be found, who would let me sue twice for greater favours.

Barn.

Barn. What shall I do! How shall I go, or stay!

Mill. Yet do not, do not leave me. I with my sex's pride would meet your scorn; but when I look upon you, when I behold those eyes---Oh! spare my tongue, and let my blushes----this flood of tears too, that will force its way, declare-----what woman's modesty should hide.

Barn. Oh, Heavens! she loves me, worthless as I am. Her looks, her words, her flowing tears confess it. And can I leave her then? Oh, never, never! Madam, dry up your tears: you shall command me always. I will stay here for ever, if you would have me.

Lucy. So; she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest, one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship, or myself.

Mill. Now you are kind, indeed; but I mean not to detain you always: I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master; but you may serve him still.

Lucy. Serve him still! Aye, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash; and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*]

Enter Blunt.

Blunt. Madam, supper's on the table.

Mill. Come, Sir; you'll excuse all defects. My thoughts were too much employed on my guest to observe the entertainment. [*Exeunt Barn. and Mill.*]

Blunt. What! is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow?

Lucy. So it seems.

Blunt. How! Is our mistress turned fool at last? She's in love with him, I suppose.

Lucy. I suppose not. But she designs to make him in love with her, if she can.

Blunt. What will she get by that? He seems under age, and can't be supposed to have much money.

Lucy. But his master has, and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

Blunt.

Blunt. I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow: while she's endeavouring to ensnare him she may be caught herself.

Lucy. Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence; for, I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

Blunt. Yes, so does the smoothness and plumpness of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

Lucy. Why, birds are their prey, and men ours; though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves. But that, I dare say, will never be the case of our mistress.

Blunt. I wish it may prove so; for you know we all depend upon her. Should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there's nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

Lucy. There's no danger of that; for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

Blunt. Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

Lucy. The most promising that can be. 'Tis true the youth hath his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them, by stifling his conscience. Oh, the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon't. [Exeunt.

SCENE *draws, and discovers Barnwell and Millwood at supper. An entertainment of music and singing. After which they come forward,*

Barn. What can I answer? All that I know is, that you are fair, and I am miserable.

Mill. We are both so; and yet the fault is in ourselves.

Barn. To ease our present anguish by plunging into guilt, is to buy a moment's pleasure with an age of pain.

Mill. I should have thought the joys of love as lasting as they are great; if ours prove otherwise, 'tis your inconstancy must make them so.

Barn. The law of Heaven will not be reversed, and that requires us to govern our passions.

Mill.

Mill. To give us sense of beauty and desires, and yet forbid us to taste and be happy, is a cruelty to nature. Have we passions only to torment us?

Barn. To hear you talk, though 't the cause of vice; to gaze upon your beauty, press your hand, 'and see your snow-white bosom heave and fall,' inflames my wishes; my pulse beats high, 'my senses are all in a hurry,' and I am on the rack of wild desire. Yet, for a moment's guilty pleasure, shall I lose my innocence, my peace of mind, and hopes of solid happiness?

Mill. Chimæras all!

Barn. I would not-----yet must on----

<p> <i>Reluctant thus the merchant quits his ease, 'And trusts to rocks and sands, and stormy seas; 'In hopes some unknown golden coast to find, 'Commits himself, tho' doubtful, to the wind, 'Longs much for joys to come, yet mourns those 'left behind.'</i> </p>	}
--	---

Mill. Along with me, and prove

No joys like woman-kind, no Heaven like love.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE *a room in Thorowgood's house.*

Enter Barnwell.

Barn. **H**OW strange are all things round me! Like some thief who treads forbidden ground, and fain would lurk unseen, fearful I enter each apartment of this well-known house. To guilty love, as if that were too little, already have I added breach of trust. A thief! Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face? Though hypocrisy may awhile conceal my guilt, at length it will be known, and public shame and ruin must ensue. In the mean time, what must be my life? Ever to speak a language foreign to my heart; hourly to add to the number of my crimes, in order to conceal 'em. Sure such was the

the

the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity. Like me, disconsolate he wandered; and while yet in Heaven, bore all his future hell about him.

Enter Truemen.

Tr. Barnwell, Oh, how I rejoice to see you safe! So will our master, and his gentle daughter; who, during your absence, often enquired after you.

Barn. Would he were gone! His officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul. [*Aside.*

Tr. Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you can't conceive how much you are beloved. But why thus cold and silent?—— When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away---why thus avoid me? What have I done? How am I altered since you saw me last? Or rather, what have you done---and why are you thus changed? for I am still the same.

Barn. What have I done, indeed! [*Aside.*

Tr. Not speak!---nor look upon me!----

Barn. By my face he will discover all I would conceal. Methinks already I begin to hate him. [*Aside.*

Tr. I cannot bear this usage from a friend; one whom till now I ever found so loving; whom yet I love; though his unkindness strikes at the root of friendship, and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

Barn. I am not well. [*Turning to him.*] Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes since you beheld 'em last.

Tr. Heavy they look, indeed, and swol'n with tears;---now they overflow. Rightly did my sympathizing heart forebode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace.

Barn. Your friendship engages you too far. My troubles, whate'er they are, are mine alone: you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me to give you a moment's pain.

Tr. You speak, as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief, I felt it. Since we parted last, I have slept no more than you; but pensive in my chamber sat alone, and spent the tedious night in wishes for your safety,
and

' and return;' e'en now, though ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart.

Barn. 'Twill not be always thus. Friendship and all engagements cease as circumstances and occasions vary; and since you once may hate me, perhaps it might be better for us both that now you loved me less.

Tr. Sure I but dream! Without a cause would Barnwell use me thus? Ungenerous, and ungrateful youth, farewell; I shall endeavour to follow your advice. [*Going.*] Yet stay; perhaps I am too rash and angry, when the cause demands compassion. Some unforeseen calamity may have befallen him, too great to bear.

Barn. What part am I reduced to act? 'Tis vile and base to move his temper thus, the best of friends and men.

Tr. I am to blame; pr'ythee forgive me, Barnwell. Try to compose your ruffled mind; and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself; my friendly counsel may restore your peace.

Barn. All that is possible for man to do for man, your generous friendship many effect; but here, even that's in vain.

Tr. Something dreadful is labouring in your breast; Oh, give it vent, and let me share your grief; 'twill ease your pain, should it admit no cure, and make it lighter, by the part I bear.

Barn. Vain supposition! My woes increase by being observed: should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

Tr. So well I know thy honest heart, guilt cannot harbour there.

Barn. Oh, torture insupportable! [*Aside.*]

Tr. Then why am I excluded? Have I a thought I would conceal from you?

Barn. If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof, nor see your face again.

Tr. 'Tis strange----but I have done----say but you hate me not.

Barn.

Barn. Hate you! I am not that monster yet.

Tr. Shall our friendship still continue?

Barn. It's a blessing I never was worthy of; yet now must stand on terms, and but upon conditions can confirm it.

Tr. What are they?

Barn. Never hereafter, though you should wonder at my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

Tr. 'Tis hard; but upon any conditions I must be your friend.

Barn. Then, as much as one lost to himself can be another's, I am your's [Embracing.]

Tr. Be ever so; and may Heaven restore your peace!

Barn. Will yesterday return? We have heard the glorious sun, that till then incessant roll'd, once stopp'd his rapid course, and once went back. The dead have risen, and parch'd rocks pour'd forth a liquid stream, to quench a people's thirst. The sea divided, and formed walls of water, while a whole nation passed in safety through its sandy bottom. Hungry lions have refused their prey; and men, unhurt, have walked amidst consuming flames; but never yet did time, once past, return.

Tr. Though the continued chain of time has never once been broke, nor ever will, but uninterrupted must keep on its course, till lost in eternity, it ends where it first began: yet as Heaven can repair whatever evils time can bring upon us, we ought never to despair.' But business requires our attendance: business, the youth's best preservative from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will you go with me?

Barn. I'll take a little time to reflect on what has past, and follow you. [Exit Trueman.] I might have trusted Trueman, and engaged him to apply to my uncle, to repair the wrong I have done my master;---but what of Millwood? Must I expose her too? Ungenerous and base! Then Heaven requires it not? But Heaven requires that I forsake her. What! never to see her more? Does Heaven require that?

' I hope

' I hope I may see her, and Heaven not be offended.
 ' Presumptuous hope! Dearly already have I proved
 ' my frailty. Should I once more tempt Heaven, I
 ' may be left to fall, never to rise again. Yet,' shall
 I leave her, for ever leave her, and not let her know
 the cause? She who loves me with such a boundless
 passion! Can cruelty be duty? I judge of what she
 then must feel, by what I now endure. The love of
 life, and fear of shame, opposed by inclination strong
 as death or shame, like wind and tide in raging con-
 flict met, when neither can prevail, keep me in doubt.
 How then can I determine?

Enter Thorowgood.

Thor. Without a cause assigned, or notice given, to
 absent yourself last night was a fault, young man, and
 I came to chide you for it, but hope I am prevented.
 That modest blush, the confusion so visible in your
 face, speak grief and shame. When we have offended
 Heaven, it requires no more: and shall man, who
 needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease?
 If my pardon, or love, be of moment to your peace,
 look up secure of both.

Barn. This goodness has o'ercome me. [*Aside.*] Oh,
 Sir, you know not the nature and extent of my of-
 fence, and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to re-
 ceive it. Though I had rather die than speak my
 shame, though racks could not have forced the guilty
 secret from my breast, your kindness has.

Thor. Enough, enough; whate'er it be, this con-
 cern shews you're convinced, and I am satisfied. How
 painful is the sense of guilt to an ingenuous mind?
 Some youthful folly, which it were prudent not to en-
 quire into. ' When we consider the frail condition
 ' of humanity, it may raise our pity, not our won-
 ' der, that youth should go astray; when reason,
 ' weak at the best, opposed to inclination, scarce
 ' formed, and wholly unassisted by experience, faintly
 ' contends, or willingly becomes the slave of sense,
 ' The state of youth is much to be deplored; and the
 ' more so, because they see it not; being then to dan-
 ' ger most exposed, when they are least prepared for
 ' their defence.'

[*Aside.*

Barn.

Barn. It will be known, and you'll recall your pardon, and abhor me.

Thor. I never will. Yet be upon your guard in this gay, thoughtless season of your life; 'when the
'sense of pleasure's quick, and passion's high, the
'voluptuous appetites, raging and fierce, demand
'the strongest curb; take heed of a relapse:' when vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost.

Barn. Hear me, on my knees, confess——

Thor. Not a syllable more upon this subject; it were not mercy, but cruelty, to hear what must give you such torment to reveal.

Barn. This generosity amazes and distracts me!

Thor. This remorse makes thee dearer to me, than if thou hadst never offended. Whatever is your fault, of this I am certain, 'twas harder for you to offend, than me to pardon. [*Exit Thorowgood.*]

Barn. Villain! villain! villain! basely to wrong so excellent a man. Should I again return to folly! -----Detested thought!-----But what of Millwood then? -----Why, I renounce her-----I give her up-----The struggle's over, and virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but gratitude compels. This unlooked-for generosity has saved me from destruction. [*Going.*]

Enter a Footman.

Foot. Sir, two ladies, from your uncle in the country, desire to see you.

Barn. Who should they be? [*Aside.*] Tell them I'll wait upon 'em. [*Exit Footman.*] Methinks I dread to see 'em —— Now, every thing alarms me! —— Guilt, what a coward hast thou made me. [*Exit.*]

SCENE *another room in Thorowgood's house.*

Enter Millwood, Lucy, and a Footman.

Foot. Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

Mill. 'Tis very well-----I thank you. [*Exit Foot.*]

Enter Barnwell.

Barn. Confusion! Millwood!

Mill. That angry look tells me, that here I am an unwelcome guest: I feared as much: the unhappy are so every where.

Barn.

Barn. Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

Mill. Unkind and cruel! Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

Barn. How did you gain admission?

Mill. Saying we were desired by your uncle to visit and deliver a message to you, we were received by the family without suspicion, and with much respect conducted here.

Barn. Why did you come at all?

Mill. I never shall trouble you more. I'm come to take my leave for ever. Such is the malice of my fate: I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left; one short hour is all I have to bestow on love and you, for whom I thought the longest life too short.

Barn. Then we are met to part for ever.

Mill. It must be so. Yet think not that time or absence shall ever put a period to my grief, or make me love you less. Though I must leave you, yet condemn me not.

Barn. Condemn you! No; I approve your resolution, and rejoice to hear it: 'tis just, 'tis necessary;--- I have well weighed, and found it so.

Lucy. I am afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had. [*Aside.*]

Barn. Before you came, I had determined never to see you more.

Mill. Confusion! [*Aside.*]

Lucy. Aye, we are all out; this is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part; they must e'en play the scene betwixt themselves. [*Aside.*]

Mill. 'Twas some relief to think, though absent, you would love me still; but to find, 'though fortune 'had been indulgent, that you, more cruel and inconstant,' you had resolv'd to cast me off---This, as I never could expect, I have not learnt to bear.

Barn. I am sorry to hear you blame me in a resolution that so well becomes us both.

Mill. I have reason for what I do, but you have none.

Barn. Can we want a reason for parting, who have so many to wish we never had met?

Mill,

Mill. Look on me, Barnwell. Am I deformed, or old, that satiety so soon succeeds enjoyment? Nay, look again: am I not she whom yesterday you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex; whose hand, trembling with extasy, you pressed and moulded thus, while on my eyes you gazed with such delight, as if desire increased by being fed.

Barn. No more; let me repent my former follies, if possible, without remembering what they were.

Mill. Why?

Barn. Such is my frailty, that 'tis dangerous.

Mill. Where is the danger, since we are to part?

Barn. The thought of that already is too painful.

Mill. If it be painful to part, then I may hope, at least, you do not hate me?

Barn. No ——— No ——— I never said I did. ———
Oh, my heart!

Mill. Perhaps you pity me?

Barn. I do ——— I do ——— Indeed I do.

Mill. You'll think upon me?

Barn. Doubt it not, while I can think at all.

Mill. You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favour, though it would be the last. [*He draws back.*] A look shall then suffice ——— Farewell ——— for ever. [*Exeunt Millwood and Lucy.*]

Barn. If to resolve to suffer be to conquer ——— I have conquered ——— Painful victory!

Re-enter Millwood and Lucy.

Mill. One thing I had forgot ——— I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should change, and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution, and that, perhaps, was needless.

Barn. I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

Mill. My friend, your arm. [*To Lucy.*] Now, I am gone for ever. [*Going.*]

Barn. One thing more ——— Sure there's no danger in knowing where you go? If you think otherwise ———

Mill. Alas! [*Weeping.*
Lucy.]

Lucy. We are right, I find; that's my cue. [*Aside.*] Ah, dear Sir, she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

Barn. Humanity obliges me to wish you well: why will you thus expose yourself to needless troubles?

Lucy. Nay, there's no help for it: she must quit the town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible. It was no small matter, you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

Mill. No more, my friend; since he for whose dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind, and pities me; where'er I wander, through wilds and desarts, benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

Barn. For my sake!-----Oh, tell me how, which way I am so cursed to bring such ruin on thee?

Mill. No matter: I am contented with my lot.

Barn. Leave me not in this uncertainty.

Mill. I have said too much.

Barn. How, how am I the cause of your undoing?

Mill. To know it will but increase your troubles.

Barn. My troubles can't be greater than they are.

Lucy. Well, well, Sir, if she won't satisfy you, I will.

Barn. I am bound to you beyond expression.

Mill. Remember, Sir, that I desired you not to hear it.

Barn. Begin, and ease my racking expectation.

Lucy. Why, you must know, my lady here was an only child, and her parents dying while she was young, left her and her fortune (no inconsiderable one, I assure you) to the care of a gentleman, who has a good estate of his own.

Mill. Aye, aye, the barbarous man is rich enough; but what are riches, when compared to love!

Lucy. For a while he performed the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hired her servants -----But you have seen in what manner she has lived, so I need say no more of that.

Mill. How I shall live hereafter, Heaven knows!

Lucy. All things went on as one could wish; till some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love

love with his charge, and would fain have married her. Now the man is neither old nor ugly, but a good personable sort of a man; but, I don't know how it was, she could never endure him. In short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him——

Mill. A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom, by this unjust account, he had stripped of all before.

Lucy. Now, she having neither money nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compelled her to pass his account, and give bond for the sum he demanded; but still provided handsomely for her, and continued his courtship, till being informed by his spies (truly I suspect some in her own family) that you were entertained in her house, and staid with her all night, he came this morning raving and storming like a mad-man; talks no more of marriage, (so there's no hope of making up matters that way) but vows her ruin, unless she'll allow him the same favour that he supposes she granted you.

Barn. Must she be ruined, or find a refuge in another's arms?

Mill. He gave me but an hour to resolve in: that's happily spent with you-----And now I go-----

Barn. 'To be exposed to all the rigours of the various seasons; the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold; unhoused, to wander friendless through the inhospitable world, in misery and want; attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge. Would'st thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing to prevent it?

Lucy. 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out.

Barn. Oh, where are all my resolutions now? 'Like early vapours, or the morning dew, chased by the sun's warm beams, they're vanished and lost, as though they had never been.'

Lucy. Now, I advised her, Sir, to comply with the gentleman; 'that would not only put an end to her troubles, but make her fortune at once.'

Barn.

Barn. Tormenting fiend, away! I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him. I will, myself, prevent her ruin, though with my own. A moment's patience; I'll return immediately.

[Exit Barnwell.]

Lucy. 'Twas well you came, or, by what I can perceive, you had lost him.

Mill. That, I must confess, was a danger I did not foresee: I was only afraid he should have come without money. You know, a house of entertainment, like mine, is not kept without expence.

Lucy. That's very true; but then you should be reasonable in your demands; 'tis pity to discourage a young man.

Mill. Leave that to me.

Re-enter Barnwell with a bag of money.

Barn. What am I about to do?——Now you, who boast your reason all-sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me; whether 'tis right to let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past?

Lucy. These young sinners think every thing in the ways of wickedness so strange!——But I could tell him that this is nothing but what's very common; for one vice as naturally begets another, as a father a son. But he'll find out that himself, if he lives long enough.

[Aside.]

Barn. Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance; return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

Mill. So, I may hope to see you there again?

Barn. Answer me not, but fly——lest, in the agonies of my remorse, I again take what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery.

Mill. Say but you'll come.

Barn. You are my fate—my Heaven, or my hell; only leave me now—dispose of me hereafter as you please. [Exit Millwood and Lucy.] What have I done? Were my resolutions founded on reason, and sincerely made? Why then has Heaven suffered me

to fall? I sought not the occasion; and, if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives. 'Is virtue inconsistent with itself, or are vice and virtue only empty names; or do they depend on accidents, beyond our power to produce or to prevent, wherein we have no part, and yet must be determined by the event?' — But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse. I find I am lost, cast down from all my late-erected hope, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why—

Such undistinguish'd horrors make my brain,
Like hell, the seat of darkness, and of pain.

[Exit.

ACT III. SCENE *a room in Thorowgood's house.*

Thorowgood *and* Trueman *discovered (with account-books) sitting at a table.*

Thor. **M**ETHINKS I would not have you only learn the method of merchandize, and practise it hereafter merely as a means of getting wealth: it will be well worth your pains to study it as a science, to see how it is founded in reason, and the nature of things; how it promotes humanity, as it has opened, and yet kept up, an intercourse between nations, far remote from one another in situation, customs, and religion; promoting arts, industry, peace, and plenty; by mutual benefits diffusing mutual love from pole to pole.

Tr. Something of this I have considered, and hope, by your assistance, to extend my thoughts much farther. I have observed those countries, where trade is promoted and encouraged, do not make discoveries to destroy, but to improve mankind by love and friendship; to tame the fierce, and polish the most savage; to teach them the advantage of honest traffic, by taking from them, with their own consent, their useless superfluities, and giving them, in return, what, from their ignorance in
manual

‘ manual arts, their situation, or some other accident,
‘ they stand in need of.’

Thor. ‘ ’Tis justly observed: the populous East,
‘ luxuriant, abounds with glittering gems, bright
‘ pearls, aromatic spices, and health-restoring drugs:
‘ the late-found Western world’s rich earth glows with
‘ unnumbered veins of gold and silver ore. On every
‘ climate, and on every country, Heaven has bestowed
‘ some good, peculiar to itself. It is the industrious
‘ merchant’s business to collect the various blessings of
‘ each soil and climate, and, with the product of the
‘ whole, to enrich his native country.’——Well, I
have examined your accounts; they are not only just,
as I have always found them, but regularly kept, and
fairly entered. I commend your diligence. Method
in business is the surest guide: ‘ he who neglects it
‘ frequently stumbles, and always wanders perplexed,
‘ uncertain, and in danger.’ Are Barnwell’s accounts
ready for my inspection? He does not use to be the
last on those occasions.

Tr. Upon receiving your orders he retired, I
thought, in some confusion. If you please, I’ll go
and hasten him. I hope he has not been guilty of any
neglect.

Thor. I’m now going to the Exchange: let him
know, at my return I expect to find him ready.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Maria with a book. Sits and reads.

Ma. How forcible is truth? The weakest mind,
inspired with love of that, fixed and collected in itself,
with indifference beholds the united force of earth
and hell opposing. Such souls are raised above the
sense of pain, or so supported that they regard it not.
The martyr cheaply purchases his Heaven; small are
his sufferings, great is his reward. Not so the wretch
who combats love with duty; whose mind, weakened
and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and hopeless,
opposes his own desires——What is an hour, a day,
a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures such as
these?

Enter Trueman.

Tr. Oh, Barnwell! Oh, my friend! how art thou fallen!

Ma. Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak, say, what of Barnwell?

Tr. 'Tis not to be concealed: I've news to tell of him that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who know him.

Ma. Defend us, Heaven!

Tr. I cannot speak it. See there.

[Trueman gives a letter, Maria reads.]

"I know my absence will surprize my honoured master and yourself; and the more, when you shall understand, that the reason of my withdrawing is, my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, 'tis needless to inform you, that I intend never to return again. Though this might have been known by examining my accounts; yet to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost

GEORGE BARNWELL."

Tr. Lost indeed! Yet how he should be guilty of what he here charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue. Justly he thought, and as he thought he practised; never was life more regular than his. An understanding uncommon at his years; an open, generous, manliness of temper; his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging.

Ma. This, and much more, you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye, and joy of every heart that knew him.

Tr. Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss? See, the fairest, happiest maid this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor, ruined Barnwell!

Ma. Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can e'er submit to live a slave to vice?

Tr. Never, never. So well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity.

Ma.

Ma. Is there no means yet to preserve him?

Tr. Oh, that there were! But few men recover their reputation lost, a merchant never. Nor would he, I fear, though I should find him, ever be brought to look his injured master in the face.

Ma. I fear as much, and therefore would never have my father know it.

Tr. That's impossible.

Ma. What's the sum?

Tr. 'Tis considerable. I've marked it here, to shew it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

Ma. If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father?

Tr. Nothing more easy. But can you intend it? Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin? Oh, 'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's! Sure Heaven, in mercy to my friend, inspired the generous thought.

Ma. Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price. But how shall he be found?

Tr. Trust to my diligence for that. In the mean time I'll conceal his absence from your father, or find such excuses for it, that the real cause shall never be suspected.

Ma. In attempting to save from shame, one whom we hope may yet return to virtue, to Heaven, and you, the only witnesses of this action, I appeal, whether I do any thing misbecoming my sex and character.

Tr. Earth must approve the deed, and Heaven, I doubt not, will reward it.

Ma. If Heaven succeeds it I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's lightest breath; and, therefore, as this must be a secret from my father and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him. [Exit.]

SCENE *a room in Millwood's house.*

Enter Lucy and Blunt.

Lucy. Well, what do you think of Millwood's conduct now?

B 3

Blunt.

Blunt. I own it is surprising. I don't know which to admire most, her feigned, or his real passion; though I have sometimes been afraid that her avarice would discover her. But his youth and want of experience make it the easier to impose on him.

Lucy. No, it is his love. To do him justice, notwithstanding his youth, he don't want understanding. But you men are much easier imposed on in these affairs, than your vanity will allow you to believe. Let me see the wisest of you all as much in love with me as Barnwell is with Millwood, and I'll engage to make as great a fool of him.

Blunt. And, all circumstances considered, to make as much money of him too.

Lucy. I can't answer for that. Her artifice in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems by which she has obliged him to continue that course, astonish even me, who know her so well.

Blunt. But then you are to consider that the money was his master's.

Lucy. There was the difficulty of it. Had it been his own, it had been nothing. Were the world his, she might have it for a smile. But those golden days are gone; he's ruined, and Millwood's hopes of farther profits there are at an end.

Blunt. That's no more than we all expected.

Lucy. Being called by his master to make up his accounts, he was forced to quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment.

Blunt. I have not heard of this before. How did she receive him?

Lucy. As you would expect. She wondered what he meant, was astonished at his impudence, and, with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance.

Blunt. That's much, indeed! But how did Barnwell behave?

Lucy. He grieved; and, at length, enraged at this barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone; and making towards the door, shewed a sum of money, which

which he had brought from his master's, the last he is ever likely to have from thence.

Blunt. But then, Millwood —

Lucy. Aye, she, with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling; hung on his neck, wept, and swore 'twas meant in jest. The amorous youth melted into tears, threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die than think her false.

Blunt. Strange infatuation!

Lucy. But what ensued was stranger still. As doubts and fears, followed by reconciliation, ever increase love, where the passion is sincere, so in him it caused so wild a transport of excessive fondness, such joy, such grief, such pleasure, and such anguish, that nature seemed sinking with the weight, and his charmed soul disposed to quit his breast for her's. Just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful Millwood prevailed upon the wretched youth to promise—what I tremble but to think on.

Blunt. I am amazed! What can it be?

Lucy. You will be more so to hear---it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation, and best benefactor.

Blunt. His uncle! whom we have often heard him speak of, as a gentleman of a large estate, and fair character, in the country where he lives.

Lucy. The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin, but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demanded this horrid sacrifice. Barnwell's near relation, 'and unsuspected virtue, 'must give too easy means to seize this good man's 'treasure;' whose blood must seal the dreadful secret, and prevent the terrors of her guilty fears.

Blunt. Is it possible she could persuade him to do an act like that? He is by nature honest, grateful, compassionate, and generous; 'and though his love, and 'her artful persuasions, have wrought him to practise 'what he most abhors, yet we all can witness for him, 'with what reluctance he has still complied: so many 'tears he shed o'er each offence, as might, if possible, 'sanctify theft, and make a merit of a crime.'

Lucy. 'Tis true, at the naming of the murder of his uncle he started into rage, and, breaking from her arms, (where she till then had held him with well-dissembled love, and false endearments) called her cruel, monster, devil, and told her she was born for his destruction. She thought it not for her purpose to meet his rage with her rage, but affected a most passionate fit of grief, railed at her fate, and cursed her wayward stars, that still her wants should force her to press him to act such deeds, as she must needs abhor as well as he. She told him necessity had no law, and love no bounds; that therefore he never truly loved, but meant, in her necessity, to forsake her. Then she kneeled, and swore, that since by his refusal he had given her cause to doubt his love, she never would see him more, unless, to prove it true, he robbed his uncle to supply her wants, and murdered him to keep it from discovery.

Blunt. I am astonished! What said he?

Lucy. Speechless he stood; but in his face you might have read, that various passions tore his very soul. Oft he in anguish threw his eyes towards Heaven, 'and then as often bent their beams on her;' then wept and groaned, and beat his troubled breast; at length, with horror not to be expressed, he cried, 'Thou cursed fair, have I not given dreadful proofs of love? What drew me from my youthful innocence, and stained my then unspotted soul, but love? What caused me to rob my worthy, gentle master, but cursed love? What makes me now a fugitive from his service, loathed by myself, and scorned by all the world, but love? What fills my eyes with tears, my soul with torture never felt on this side death before? Why love! love! love! And why, above all, do I resolve (for, tearing his hair, he cried, I do resolve) to kill my uncle?

Blunt. Was she not moved? It makes me weep to hear the sad relation.

Lucy. Yes——with joy, that she had gain'd her point. She gave him no time to cool, but urged him to attempt it instantly. He's now gone. If he performs it, and escapes, there's more money for her; if not, he'll ne'er return, and then she's fairly rid of him,

Blunt.

Blunt. 'Tis time the world were rid of such a monster.

Lucy. If we don't use our endeavours to prevent the murder, we are as bad as she.

Blunt. I'm afraid it is too late.

Lucy. Perhaps not. Her barbarity to Barnwell makes me hate her. We have run too great a length with her already. I did not think her or myself so wicked as I find, upon reflection, we are.

Blunt. 'Tis true, we have all been too much so. But there is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing, when compared to that; I would not be involved in the guilt of it for all the world.

Lucy. Nor I, Heaven knows. Therefore let us clear ourselves, by doing all that's in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way, that to me seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this cursed design?

Blunt. With all my heart. He who knows of a murder intended to be committed, and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason, is a murderer.

Lucy. Let us lose no time. I'll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. [Exeunt.]

SCENE *a walk, at some distance from a country seat.*

Enter Barnwell.

Barn. A dismal gloom obscures the face of day. Either the sun has slipped behind a cloud, or journies down the west of Heaven with more than common speed, to avoid the sight of what I am doomed to act. Since I set forth on this accursed design, where'er I tread, methinks the solid earth trembles beneath my feet. "Murder my uncle!" 'Yonder limpid stream, whose hoary fall has made a natural cascade, as I passed by, in doleful accents seemed to murmur—murder! The earth, the air, and water seemed concerned. But that's not strange: the world is punished, and nature feels a shock, when Providence permits a good man's fall. Just Heaven! then what should I feel for him that was my father's only brother,

• and, since his death, has been to me a father; that
 • took me up an infant and an orphan, reared me with
 • tenderest care, and still indulged me with most
 • paternal fondness! Yet here I stand his destined mur-
 • derer.'——I stiffen with horror at my own impiety—
 'Tis yet unperformed——What if I quit my bloody
 purpose, and fly the place? [*Going, then stops.*]——But
 whither, Oh, whither shall I fly? My master's once
 friendly doors are ever shut against me, and without
 money Millwood will never see me more; and she has
 got such firm possession of my heart, and governs there
 with such despotic sway, that life is not to be endured
 without her. Aye, there's the cause of all my sin and
 sorrow: 'tis more than love; it is the fever of the soul,
 and madness of desire. In vain does nature, reason,
 conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears
 down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft,
 and murder. Oh, conscience, feeble guide to virtue,
 thou only shewest us when we go astray, but wantest
 power to stop us in our course!——Ha! in yonder shady
 walk I see my uncle——He's alone——Now for my
 disguise. [*Plucks out a vizor.*]——This is his hour of
 private meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul
 for Heaven, while I——But what have I to do with
 Heaven?——Ha! no struggles, conscience——

Hence, hence remorse, and ev'ry thought that's good;
 The storm that lust began must end in blood.

[*Puts on the vizor, draws a pistol, and exits.*]

SCENE *a close walk, in a wood.*

Enter Uncle.

Un. If I were superstitious, I should fear some dan-
 ger lurked unseen, or death were nigh. A heavy me-
 lancholy clouds my spirits. My imagination is filled
 with ghastly forms of dreary graves, and bodies changed
 by death; when the pale lengthen'd visage attracts each
 weeping eye, and fills the musing soul at once with
 grief and horror, pity and aversion. I will indulge
 the thought. The wise man prepares himself for
 death by making it familiar to his mind. When
 strong

GEORGE BARNWELL.



Deighuon ad viv. del.

Walker sculp

M^R BRERETON in the Character of **BARNWELL**.

*— Yet Heaven from its high
Throne, in justice or in Mercy now look down,
on that dear, Murthered Saint, & me the Murtherer—*

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Act 3 Sc. last.



strong reflections hold the mirror near, and the living in the dead behold their future self: how does each inordinate passion and desire cease, or sicken at the view! The mind scarce moves; the blood curdling and chilled, creeps slowly through the veins; fixed, still, and motionless we stand, so like the solemn object of our thoughts. we are almost at present what we must be hereafter; till curiosity awakes the soul, and sets it on enquiry.

Enter George Barnwell, at a distance.

Oh, death! thou strange, mysterious power, seen every day, yet never understood, but by the incommunicative dead, what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that worlds exotic finds. or thinks it finds, thy thick clouds attempts to pass in vain; lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom, defeated, she returns more doubtful than before, of nothing certain but of labour lost.

[*During this speech Barnwell sometimes presents the pistol, and draws it back again.*]

Barn. Oh, 'tis impossible! [*Throwing down the pistol.*]

[*Uncle starts, and attempts to draw his sword.*]

Uncle. A man so near me! armed and masqued——

Barn. Nay, then there's no retreat.

[*Plucks a poignard from his bosom, and stabs him.*]

Uncle. Oh, I am slain! All gracious Heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant: bless, with the choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer, and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy!

[*Barnwell throws off his mask, runs to him, and kneeling by him, raises and chafes him.*]

Barn. Expiring faint! Oh, murdered, martyred uncle! lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer.——Oh, do not look so tenderly upon me——Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die.——By Heaven, he weeps, in pity of my woes.——Tears, tears for blood.——The murdered, in the agonies of death, weeps for his murderer——Oh, speak your pious purpose; pronounce my pardon then, and take me with you——

He would, but cannot.----Oh, why with such fond affection do you press my murdering hand?----[*Uncle sighs and dies.*] ‘What, will you kiss me?’ Life, that hovered on his lips but till he had sealed my pardon, in that sigh expired! - He’s gone for ever---‘and, ‘Oh! I follow----[*Swoons away upon his uncle’s dead body.*]’ Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the wholesome air? Let Heaven from its high throne, in justice or in mercy, now look down on that dear murdered saint, and me the murderer, and if his vengeance spares, let pity strike, and end my wretched being.——Murder the worst of crimes, and parricide the worst of murders, and this the worst of parricides. ‘Cain, who stands on record from the birth of time, ‘and must to its last final period, as accursed, slew a ‘brother favoured above him: detested Nero, by another’s hand, dispatched a mother that he feared and ‘hated: but I, with my own hand, have murdered a ‘brother, mother, father, and a friend, most loving ‘and beloved.—This execrable act of mine is without ‘a parallel.—Oh, may it ever stand alone, the last of ‘murders as it is the worst!

‘The rich man thus, in torment and despair,
 ‘Preferr’d his vain, his charitable prayer.
 ‘The fool, his own soul lost, would fain be wise
 ‘For others good; but Heaven his suit denies.
 ‘By laws and means well-known we stand or fall,
 ‘And one eternal rule remains for all.’

“*Oh, may it ever stand alone accurst,
 “The last of murders as it is the worst.”*”

ACT IV. SCENE *a room in Thorowgood’s house.*

Enter Maria, meeting Trueman.

‘*Maria.* **H**OW falsely do they judge, who censure
 ‘or applaud, as we’re afflicted or re-
 ‘warded here? I know I am unhappy; yet cannot
 ‘charge myself with any crime, more than the com-
 ‘mon frailties of our kind, that should provoke just
 ‘Heaven to mark me out for sufferings so uncommon
 ‘and severe. Falsely to accuse ourselves, Heaven must
 ‘abhor.

‘ abhor. Then it is just and right that innocence
 ‘ should suffer; for Heaven must be just in all its ways.
 ‘ Perhaps by that we are kept from moral evils much
 ‘ worse than penal, or more improved in virtue. Or
 ‘ may not the lesser ills that we sustain, be made the
 ‘ means of greater good to others? Might all the joy-
 ‘ less days and sleepless nights that I have passed, but
 ‘ purchase peace for thee,

‘ Thou dear, dear cause of all my grief and pain,
 ‘ Small were the loss, and infinite the gain;
 ‘ Though to the grave in secret love I pine,
 ‘ So life, and fame, and happiness were thine.’

What news of Barnwell?

Tr. None; I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

Ma. Does my father yet suspect the cause of his absence?

Tr. All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should. But his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father is wise; and though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses I would make for Barnwell, yet I am afraid he regards ’em only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment.

‘ *Ma.* How does the unhappy youth defeat all our
 ‘ designs to serve him! yet I can never repent what
 ‘ we have done. Should he return, ’twill make his
 ‘ reconciliation with my father easier, and preserve
 ‘ him from future reproach of a malicious and unfor-
 ‘ giving world.’

Enter Thorowgood and Lucy.

Thor. This woman here has given me a sad, and, bating some circumstances, too probable an account of Barnwell’s defection.

Lucy. I am sorry, Sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion.

Thor. It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. Among many other particulars, she informs me, that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me, at several times, of considerable sums of money. Now, as I
 know

know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation, too dreadful to be willingly believed.

Mo. Sir, your pardon: I find myself on a sudden so indisposed, that I must retire. 'Providence opposes all attempts to save him.' Poor, ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria! [*Aside. Exit Maria.*]

Thor. How am I distressed on every side! Pity for that unhappy youth, fear for the life of a much valuable friend---and then my child---the only joy and hope of my declining life!-----Her melancholy increases hourly, and gives me painful apprehensions of her loss-----Oh, Trueman, this person informs me that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle.

Tr. Oh, execrable deed! I'm blasted with the horror of the thought!

Lucy. This delay may ruin all.

Thor. What to do, or think, I know not. That he ever wronged me, I know is false: the rest may be so too; there's all my hope.

Tr. Trust not to that; rather suppose all true, than lose a moment's time. Even now the horrid deed may be doing---dreadful imagination!----or it may be done, and we be vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past.

Thor. This earnestness convinces me that he knows more than he has yet discovered. What, ho! without there, who waits?

Enter a Servant.

Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse, and prepare to set out with speed; an affair of life and death demands his diligence. [*Exit Servant.*] For you, whose behaviour on this occasion I have no time to commend as it deserves, I must engage your further assistance. Return, and observe this Millwood till I come. I have your directions, and will follow you as soon as possible. [*Exit Lucy.*] Trueman, you, I am sure, will not be idle on this occasion. [*Exit Thorowgood,*

Tr. He only who is a friend, can judge of my distress. [*Exit.*]

SCENE

SCENE *Millwood's house.**Enter Millwood.*

Mill. I wish I knew the event of his design. The attempt without success would ruin him.——Well, what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, through pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought of that before. Suppose the deed done; then, and then only, I shall be secure——Or what if he returns without attempting it at all——
 [*Enter Barnwell bloody.*] But he is here, and I have done him wrong. His bloody hands shew he has done the deed, but shew he wants the prudence to conceal it.

Barn. Where shall I hide me? Whither shall I fly to avoid the swift unerring hand of justice?

Mill. Dismiss your fears: though thousands had pursued you to the door, yet being entered here, you are as safe as innocence. I have a cavern, by art so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes of jealousy and revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you, if any danger's near.

Barn. Oh, hide me —— from myself, if it be possible; for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, though I were hid where man's eye never saw, nor light ere dawned, 'twere all in vain. For, Oh, that inmate, that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder, and execute me with never-ending torments. Behold these hands all crimsoned o'er with my dear uncle's blood. Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue!

Mill. Ridiculous! Then it seems you are afraid of your own shadow, or, what is less than a shadow, your conscience.

Barn. Though to man unknown I did the accursed act, what can hide me from Heaven's all-seeing eye?

Mill. No more of this stuff! What advantage have
 you

you made by his death; or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure, which, no doubt, were about him? What gold, what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me?

Barn. Think you I added sacrilege to murder! Oh, had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me by the double name of nephew and of murderer; (alas, alas, he knew not then that his nephew was his murderer!) how would you have wished, as I did, though you had a thousand years of life to come, to have given them all to have lengthened his one hour. But being dead, I fled the sight of what my hands had done; nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated, by theft, his sacred corpse.

Mill. Whining, preposterous, canting villain! to murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first, last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury, then fear to take what he no longer wanted, and bring to me your penury and guilt. Do you think I'll hazard my reputation, nay, my life, to entertain you?

Barn. Oh, Millwood! ————this from thee? ———— But I have done—If you hate me, if you wish me dead, then are you happy; for, Oh, 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me.

Mill. In this madness he will discover all, and involve me in his ruin. We are on a precipice, from whence there's no retreat for both. Then to preserve myself——[*Pauses.*]——'There is no other way. 'Tis dreadful; but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice. It must be done. [*Aside. Rings a bell; enter a Servant.*]—Fetch me an officer, and seize this villain, He has confess'd himself a murderer. Should I let him escape, I might justly be thought as bad as he.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Barn. Oh, Millwood! sure you do not, you cannot mean it. Stop the messenger; upon my knees, I beg you'd call him back. 'Tis fit I die, indeed,
but

but not by you. I will this instant throw myself into the hands of justice, indeed I will; for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture.

Mill. Call it what you will: I am willing to live, and live secure, which nothing but your death can warrant.

Barn. If there be a pitch of wickedness that sets the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me, but a dismal dungeon, hard galling fetters, an awful trial, and an ignominious death, justly to fall unpitied and abhorred? 'After death to be suspended between Heaven and earth, a dreadful spectacle, the warning "and horror of a gaping crowd!" This I could bear, nay, wish not to avoid, had it but come from any hand but thine.

Enter Blunt, Officer, and Attendants.

Mill. Heaven defend me! Conceal a murderer! Here, Sir, take this youth into your custody, I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge, [*They seize him.*]

Barn. To whom, of what, or how shall I complain? I'll not accuse her. The hand of Heaven is in it, and this the punishment of lust and parricide. 'Yet Heaven, that justly cuts me off, still suffers her to live; perhaps to punish others. Tremendous mercy! So fiends are cursed with immortality, to be the executioners of Heaven.'

Be warn'd ye youths, who see my sad despair;

Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair.

'By reason guided, honest joys pursue;

'The fair to honour and to virtue true,

'Just to herself, will ne'er be false to you.'

By my example learn to shun my fate,

(How wretched is the man who's wise too late!)

Ere innocence, and fame, and life be lost,

Here purchase wisdom cheaply at my cost.

[Exeunt Barnwell, Officer, and Attendants.]

Mill. Where's Lucy? Why is she absent at such a time?

Blunt.

Blunt. Would I had been so too! Lucy will soon be here; and I hope to thy confusion, thou devil!

Mill. Insolent! This to me!

Blunt. The worst that we know of the devil is, that he first seduces to sin, and then betrays to punishment.

[*Exit Blunt.*

Mill. They disapprove of my conduct then, 'and mean to take this opportunity to set up for themselves.' My ruin is resolved. I see my danger, but scorn both it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments.

[*Going.*

Enter Therowgood.

Thor. Where is the scandal of her own sex, and curse of ours?

Mill. What means this insolence? Whom do you seek for?

Thor. Millwood.

Mill. Well, you have found her then. I am Millwood.

Thor. Then you are the most impious wretch that e'er the sun beheld.

Mill. From your appearance I should have expected wisdom and moderation; but your manners belie your aspect. What is your business here? I know you not.

Thor. Hereafter you may know me better. I am Barnwell's master.

Mill. Then you are master to a villain; which, I think, is not much to your credit.

Thor. Had he been as much above thy arts, as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not have blushed to own him.

Mill. My arts! I don't understand you, Sir. If he has done amiss, what's that to me? Was he my servant, or yours? You should have taught him better.

Thor. Why should I wonder to find such uncommon impudence in one arrived to such a height of wickedness? 'When innocence is banish'd, modesty soon follows.' Know, forcrefs, I'm not ignorant of any of the arts by which you first deceived the unwary youth. I know how, step by step, you've led him on, reluctant and unwilling, from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which you contrived, and by your cursed wiles even forced him to commit.

Mill.

Mill. Ha! Lucy has got the advantage, and accused me first. Unless I can turn the accusation, and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost. [*Aside.*]

Thor. Had I known your cruel design sooner, it had been prevented. To see you punished, as the law directs, is all that now remains. Poor satisfaction! For he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too. 'But Heaven, who knows our frame, and graciously distinguishes between frailty and presumption, will make a difference, though man cannot, who sees not the heart, but only judges by the outward action.'

Mill. I find, Sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprized at such ill treatment without cause, from a gentleman of your appearance, and therefore too hastily returned it, for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on, as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant, and some way or other necessary to his undoing.

Thor. I charge you as the cause, the sole cause of all his guilt, and all his suffering, of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

Mill. 'Tis very strange? But who's secure from scandal and detraction? So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since this fatal accident, which I lament as much as you. 'Tis true I have a servant, on whose account he hath of late frequented my house. If she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to blame? Has not Barnwell done the same by you?

Thor. I hear you. Pray go on.

Mill. I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him; but till now I always thought it innocent. I know her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now, who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder, to supply her extravagances.——It must be so. I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it. I'll have her, and a man-servant whom

whom I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. I hope, Sir, you will lay aside your ill-grounded suspicions of me, and join to punish the real contrivers of this bloody deed, [Offers to go.

Thor. Madam, you pass not this way. I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

Mill. I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name, to screen such guilty wretches. Consider, Sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime!

Thor. I do ——— and of betraying him when it was done.

Mill. That which you call betraying him may convince you of my innocence. She who loves him, though she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with horror at his crimes, have done.

Thor. How should an unexperienced youth escape her snares? ‘The powerful magic of her wit and form might betray the wisest to simple dotage, and fire the blood that age had froze long since.’ Even I, that with just prejudice came prepared, had by her artful story been deceived, but that my strong conviction of her guilt makes even a doubt impossible. [*Aside.* Those whom subtilly you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and, which proves unanswerably their innocence, and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to prevent it.

Mill. Sir, you are very hard to be convinced; but I have a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objection. [*Exit Millwood.*

Enter Lucy, Trueman, Blunt, Officers, &c.

Lucy. Gentlemen, pray place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you. This way, [*To Thorowgood.*] and note her behaviour. I have observed her; she’s driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design.

Re-enter Millwood with a pistol, Trueman secures her.

Tr.

Tr. Here thy power of doing mischief ends, deceitful, cruel, bloody woman!

Mill. Fool, hypocrite, villain, man! Thou can'st not call me that.

Tr. To call thee woman were to wrong thy sex, thou devil!

Mill. That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected. A mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness, and that of all mankind.

Thor. Think not by aggravating the faults of others to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and body is not the least.

Mill. If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robbed me of 'em ere I knew their worth; then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss.—Another, and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdained, and yet disdains, dependance and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw secured the worst of men from both; I found it therefore necessary to be rich, and to that end I summoned all my arts. You call 'em wicked; be it so; they were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

Thor. Sure none but the worst of men conversed with thee!

Mill. Men of all degrees, and all professions, I have known, yet found no difference, but in their several capacities; all were alike, wicked to the utmost of their power, 'In pride, contention, avarice, cruelty, and ' revenge, the reverend priesthood were my unerring ' guides. From suburb magistrates, who live by ruined ' reputations, as the inhospitable natives of Cornwall ' do by shipwreck, I learned, that to charge my innocent neighbours with my crimes, was to merit their ' protection: for, to screen the guilty, is the less scandalous, when many are suspected; and detraction, like ' darkness and death, blackens all objects, and levels all ' distinction. Such are your venal magistrates, who favour none but such as by their office they are sworn ' to punish. With them, not the guilty, is the worst ' of crimes; and large fees, privately paid, are every ' needful virtue.

Thor.

Thor. Your practice has sufficiently discovered your contempt of laws, both human and divine; no wonder then that you should hate the officers of both.

Mill. I know you, and I hate you all. I expect no mercy, and I ask for none. I follow my inclinations, and that the best of you do every day. 'All actions seem alike natural and indifferent to man and beast, who devour, or are devoured, as they meet with others weaker or stronger than themselves.

Thor. What pity it is a mind so comprehensive, daring, and inquisitive, should be a stranger to religion's sweet and powerful charms!

Mill. I am not fool enough to be an atheist, though I have known enough of men's hypocrisy to make a thousand simple women so. Whatever religion is in itself, as practised by mankind, it has caused the evils you say it was designed to cure, War, plague, and famine, have not destroyed so many of the human race as this pretended piety has done; and with such barbarous cruelty, as if the only way to honour Heaven were to turn the present world into hell.

Thor. Truth is truth, though from an enemy, and spoken in malice. You bloody, blind, and superstitious bigots, how will you answer this?

Mill. What are your laws, of which you make your boast, but the fool's wisdom, and the coward's valour, the instrument and screen of all your villainies? By them you punish in others what you act yourselves, or would have acted, had you been in their circumstances. The judge, who condemns the poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor.—Thus you go on deceiving and being deceived, harassing, plaguing, and destroying one another. But women are your universal prey:

Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,
With cruel arts you labour to destroy:
A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.
Oh, may from hence each violated maid,
By flattering, faithless, barb'rous man betray'd,
When robb'd of innocence and virgin fame,
From your destruction raise a nobler name,

To

To avenge their sex's wrongs devote their mind,
And future Millwoods prove to plague mankind.
[*Exeunt.*]

‘ACT V. SCENE *a room in a prison.*

‘*Enter* Thorowgood, Blunt. *and* Lucy.

‘*Thor.* I Have recommended to Barnwell a reverend
‘divine, whose judgment and integrity I am
‘well acquainted with. Nor has Millwood been ne-
‘glected; but she, unhappy woman, still obstinate,
‘refuses his assistance.

‘*Lucy.* This pious charity to the afflicted well be-
‘comes your character; yet pardon me, Sir, if I won-
‘der you were not at their trial.

‘*Thor.* I knew it was impossible to save him; and I
‘and my family bear so great a part in his distress,
‘that to have been present would but have aggravated
‘our sorrows, without relieving his.

‘*Blunt.* It was mournful indeed. Barnwell's youth
‘and modest deportment, as he passed, drew tears from
‘every eye. When placed at the bar, and arraigned
‘before the reverend judges, with many tears and inter-
‘rupting sobs, he confessed and aggravated his of-
‘fences, without accusing, or once reflecting on Mill-
‘wood, the shameless author of his ruin. But she,
‘dauntless and unconcerned, stood by his side, view-
‘ing with visible pride and contempt the vast assembly,
‘who all with sympathizing sorrow wept for the
‘wretched youth. Millwood, when called upon to an-
‘swer, loudly insisted upon her innocence, and made
‘an artful and a bold defence; but finding all in vain,
‘the impartial jury and the learned bench concurring
‘to find her guilty, how did she curse herself, poor
‘Barnwell, us, her judges, and all mankind. But
‘what could that avail? She was condemned, and is
‘this day to suffer with him.

‘*Thor.* The time draws on. I am going to visit
‘Barnwell, as you are Millwood.

‘*Lucy.* We have not wronged her, yet I dread this
‘interview.

‘ interview. She’s proud, impatient, wrathful, and
 ‘ unforgiving. To be the branded instruments of
 ‘ vengeance, to suffer in her shame, and sympathize
 ‘ with her in all the suffers, is the tribute we must pay
 ‘ for our former ill-spent lives, and long confederacy
 ‘ with her in wickedness.

‘ *Thor.* Happy for you it ended when it did. What
 ‘ you have done against Millwood I know proceeded
 ‘ from a just abhorrence of her crimes, free from in-
 ‘ terest, malice, or revenge. Profelytes to virtue should
 ‘ be encouraged: pursue your proposed reformation,
 ‘ and know me hereafter for your friend.

‘ *Lucy.* This is a blessing as unhop’d for as unme-
 ‘ rited. But Heaven, that snatch’d us from impend-
 ‘ ing ruin, sure intends you as its instrument to secure
 ‘ us from apostacy.

‘ *Thor.* With gratitude to impute your deliverance
 ‘ to Heaven is just. Many, less virtuously disposed than
 ‘ Barnwell was, have never fallen in the manner he has
 ‘ done. May not such owe their safety rather to Pro-
 ‘ vidence than to themselves? With pity and compas-
 ‘ sion let us judge him. Great were his faults, but
 ‘ strong was the temptation. Let his ruin teach us dis-
 ‘ fidence, humanity, and circumspection; for if we,
 ‘ who wonder at his fate, had like him been tried,
 ‘ like him perhaps we had fallen.’ [Exeunt.

SCENE *a dungeon, a table, and a lamp.* Barnwell
reading.

Enter Thorowgood, at a distance.

Thor. There see the bitter fruits of passion’s detested
 reign, and sensual appetite indulg’d; severe reflections,
 penitence, and tears,

Barn. My honoured, injured master, whose goodness
 has cover’d me a thousand times with shame, forgive
 this last unwilling disrespect. Indeed I saw you not.

Thor. ‘ Piswell: I hope you are better employed in
 viewing of yourself; ‘ your journey’s long, your time
 ‘ for preparation almost spent.’ I sent a reverend di-
 vine to teach you to improve it, and should be glad
 to hear of his success.

Barn. The word of truth, which he recommended
 for

for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I laboured under. From thence I have learned the infinite extent of heavenly mercy; that my offences, though great, are not unpardonable; and that 'tis not my interest only, but my duty, to believe and to rejoice in my hope. So shall Heaven receive the glory, and future penitents the profit of my example.

Thor. Proceed.

Barn. 'Tis wonderful that words should charm despair, speak peace and pardon to a murderer's conscience; but truth and mercy flow in every sentence, attended with force and energy divine. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt, and trembling I rejoice; I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears than the horror and anguish of despair before.

Thor. These are the genuine signs of true repentance; the only preparatory, the certain way to everlasting peace. 'Oh, the joy it gives to see a soul formed and prepared for Heaven! For this the faithful minister devotes himself to meditation, abstinence, and prayer, shunning the vain delights of sensual joys, and daily dies, that others may live for ever. For this he turns the sacred volumes o'er, and spends his life in painful search of truth. The love of riches, and the lust of power, he looks upon with just contempt and detestation; he only counts for wealth the souls he wins, and his highest ambition is to serve mankind. If the reward of all his pains be to preserve one soul from wandering, or turn one from the error of his ways, how does he then rejoice, and own his little labours overpaid!'

Barn. What do I owe for all your generous kindness? But though I cannot, Heaven can and will reward you.

Thor. To see thee thus, is joy too great for words. Farewell.—Heaven strengthen thee!—Farewell.

Barn. Oh, Sir, there's something I would say, if my sad swelling heart would give me leave.

Thor. Give it vent awhile, and try.

Barn. I had a friend—'tis true I am unworthy——

yet methinks your generous example might persuade—
Could I not see him once, before I go from whence
there's no return?

Thor. He's coming, and as much thy friend as ever.
I will not anticipate his sorrow; too soon he'll see the
sad effects of this contagious ruin.—This torrent of
domestic misery bears too hard upon me. I must re-
tire, to indulge a weakness I find impossible to over-
come. [*Aside.*] Much loved—and much lamented
youth!—Farewell.——Heaven strengthen thee!
——Eternally farewell.

Barn. The best of masters, and of men——Farewell.
While I live let me not want your prayers.

Thor. Thou shalt not. Thy peace being made with
Heaven, death is already vanquished. Bear a little
longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and
cease from pain for ever. [*Exit Thorowgood.*]

Barn. Perhaps I shall. I find a power within, that
bears my soul above the fears of death; and, spite of
conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure
more than mortal.

Enter Trueman and Keeper.

Keep. Sir, there's the prisoner. [*Exit Keeper.*]

Barn. Trueman!—My friend, whom I so wished to
see; yet, now he's here, I dare not look upon him.

[*Weeps.*]

Tr. Oh, Barnwell! Barnwell!

Barn. Mercy! Mercy! gracious Heaven! For
death, but not for this, I was prepared.

Tr. What have I suffered since I saw thee last!—
What pain has absence given me!——But, Oh, to
see thee thus!——

Barn. I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of
thy generous soul:——But I was born to murder
all who love me. [*Both weep.*]

Tr. I came not to reproach you; I thought to bring
you comfort; but I'm deceived, for I have none to give.
I came to share thy sorrow, but cannot bear my own.

Barn. My sense of guilt indeed you cannot know;
'tis what the good and innocent, like you, can ne'er
conceive: but other griefs at present I have none, but
what

what I feel for you. In your sorrow I read you love me still; but yet, methinks, 'tis strange, when I consider what I am.

Tr. No more of that. I can remember nothing but thy virtues, thy honest, tender friendship, our former happy state, and present misery. Oh, had you trusted me, when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

Barn. Alas, thou knowest not what a wretch I've been. Breach of friendship was my first, and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness, so devoted to the author of my ruin, that had she insisted on my murdering thee,———I think———I should have done it.

Tr. Pr'ythee aggravate thy faults no more.

Barn. I think I should! Thus good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

Tr. We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms.

Barn. Never, never will I taste such joys on earth; never will I soothe my just remorse. Are those honest aims and faithful bosom fit to embrace and to support a murderer? These iron fetters only shall clasp, and stony pavement bear me [*throwing himself on the ground*]; even these too good for such a bloody monster.

Tr. Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low, but love will find thee. Here will we offer to stern calamity; this place the altar, and ourselves the sacrifice. Our mutual groans shall echo to each other through the dreary vault; our sighs shall number the moments as they pass; and mingling tears communicate such anguish, as words were never made to express.

Barn. Then be it so [*Rising*]. Since you propose an intercourse of woe, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine [*Embracing*]. Where's now the anguish that you promised? You've taken mine, and make me no return. Sure peace and comfort dwell within these arms, and sorrow can't approach me while I am here. ' This too is the work of Heaven; which
' having before spoke peace and pardon to me, now

‘ sends thee to confirm it.’ Oh, take, take some of the joy that overflows my breast!

Tr. I do, do. Almighty power! how hast thou made us capable to bear at once the extremes of pleasure and of pain!

Enter Keeper.

Keep. Sir.

Tr. I come.

[*Exit Keeper.*]

Barn. Must you leave me? Death would soon have parted us for ever,

Tr. Oh, my Barnwell! there’s yet another task behind. Again your heart must bleed for others woes.

Barn. To meet and part with you, I thought was all I had to do on earth. What is there more for me to do or suffer?

Tr. I dread to tell thee, yet it must be known!—
Maria——

Barn. Our master’s fair and virtuous daughter?

Tr. The same.

Barn. No misfortune, I hope, has reached that maid! Preserve her, Heaven, from every ill, to shew mankind that goodness is your care!

Tr. Thy, thy misfortunes, my unhappy friend, have reached her ear. Whatever you and I have felt, and more, if more be possible, she feels for you.

Barn. ‘ I know he doth abhor a lie, and would not ‘ trifle with his dying friend.’ This is indeed the bitterness of death.

[*Aside.*]

Tr. You must remember (for we all observed it) for some time past, a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown; till, hearing of your dreadful fate, the long-stifled flame blazed out; ‘ she wept and ‘ wrung her hands, and tore her hair,’ and in the transport of her grief discovered her own lost state, while she lamented yours.

Barn. ‘ Will all the pain I feel restore thy ease, ‘ lovely unhappy maid! [*Weeping*]’ Why did you not let me die, and never know it?

Tr. It was impossible. She makes no secret of her
passion

passion for you ; she is determined to see you ere you die, and waits for me to introduce her.

[*Exit Trueman.*]

Barn. Vain, busy thoughts, be still ! What avails it to think on what I might have been ! I now am what I've made myself.

Enter Trueman and Maria.

Tr. Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene. This is the seat of misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves her public victims. This is the entrance to a shameful death.

Ma. To this sad place then no improper guest, the abandoned lost Maria brings despair, and sees the subject and the cause of all this world of woe. Silent and motionless he stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode, and the lifeless form alone was left behind, 'yet that 'so perfect, that beauty and death, ever at enmity, 'now seem united there.'

Barn. 'I groan, but murmur not.' Just Heaven ! I am your own ; do with me what you please.

Ma. Why are your streaming eyes still fix'd below, as though thou'dst give the greedy earth thy sorrows, and rob me of my due ? Were happiness within your power, you should bestow it where you pleased ; but in your misery I must and will partake.

Barn. Oh, say not so, but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate. Consider what you are, 'how vast your 'fortune, and how bright your fame. Have pity on 'your youth, your beauty, and unequalled virtue ; for 'which so many noble peers have sigh'd in vain.' Bless with your charms some honourable lord. 'Adorn with 'your beauty, and by your example improve the English 'court that justly claims such merit : 'so shall I quickly be to you——as though I had never been.

Ma. When I forget you, I must be so indeed. Reason, choice, virtue all forbid it. Let women, like Millwood, if there are more such women, smile in prosperity, and in adversity forsake. Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made.

Tr. Lovely, illfated maid! ‘ Was there ever such
 ‘ generous distress before! How must this pierce his
 ‘ grateful heart, and aggravate his woes.

Barn. Ere I knew guilt or shame, when fortune
 smiled, and when my youthful hopes were at the highest;
 if then to have raised my thoughts to you, had been
 presumption in me never to have been pardoned, think
 how much beneath yourself you condescend to regard
 me now.

‘ *Ma.* Let her blush, who, proffering love, invades
 ‘ the freedom of your sex’s choice, and meanly sues
 ‘ in hopes of a return. Your inevitable fate hath ren-
 ‘ dered hope impossible as vain. ‘ Then why should I
 ‘ fear to avow a passion so just and so disinterested?

‘ *Tr.* If any should take occasion from Millwood’s
 ‘ crimes to libel the best and fairest part of the crea-
 ‘ tion, here let them see their error. ‘ The most distant
 ‘ hopes of such a tender passion from so bright a maid,
 ‘ might add to the happiness of the most happy, and
 ‘ make the greatest proud; yet here ’tis lavished in vain.
 ‘ Though by the rich present the generous donor is un-
 ‘ done, he on whom it is bestowed receives no benefit.

‘ *Barn.* So the aromatic spices of the east, which
 ‘ all the living covet and esteem, are with unavailing
 ‘ kindness wasted on the dead.’

Ma. Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all
 my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from approach-
 ing death?——from such a death? ——“ *Oh for-
 row insupportable!*” ——‘ Oh, terrible idea! ——
 ‘ What is her misery and distress, who sees the first, last
 ‘ object of her love, for whom alone she’d live, for
 ‘ whom she’d die a thousand thousand deaths, if it
 ‘ were possible, expiring in her arms! Yet she is
 ‘ happy, when compared to me. Were millions of
 ‘ worlds mine, I’d gladly give them in exchange for
 ‘ her condition. The most consummate woe is light
 ‘ to mine. The last of curses to other miserable
 ‘ maids is all I ask for my relief, and that’s denied
 ‘ me.

‘ *Tr.* Time and reflection cure all ills.

‘ *Ma.* All but this. His dreadful catastrophe vir-
 ‘ tue

‘tue herself abhors. To give a holiday to suburb
 ‘slaves, and passing entertain the savage herd, who,
 ‘elbowing each other for a fight, pursue and press
 ‘upon him like his fate!——A mind with piety and
 ‘resolution armed may smile on death:——But
 ‘public ignominy, everlasting shame, shame the death
 ‘of souls, to die a thousand times, and yet survive
 ‘even death itself in never-dying infamy——Is this
 ‘to be endured?——Can I who live in him, and must
 ‘each hour of my devoted life feel all these woes re-
 ‘newed——Can I endure this?

‘*Tr.* Grief has so impaired her spirits, she pants,
 ‘as in the agonies of death.’

Barn. Preserve her, Heaven, and restore her peace,
 nor let her death be added to my crimes! [*Bell tolls.*]
 I am summoned to my fate.

Enter Keeper.

Keep. Sir, the officers attend you. Millwood is
 already summoned.

Barn. Tell ‘em, I am ready. And now, my friend,
 farewell [*Embracing*]. Support and comfort, the best
 you can, this mourning fair,——No more——
 Forget not to pray for me. •[*Turning to Maria.*]
 Would you, bright excellence, permit me the honour
 of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world
 could give were mine. [*She inclines towards him; they*
embrace.] Exalted goodness! Oh, turn your eyes from
 earth and me to Heaven, where virtue, like yours, is
 ever heard. Pray for the peace of my departing soul!
 Early my race of wickedness began, and soon I reach-
 ed the summit. ‘Ere nature has finished her work,
 ‘and stamped me man, just at the time when others
 ‘begin to stray, my course is finished. Though short
 ‘my span of life, and few my days, yet count my
 ‘crimes for years, and I have lived whole ages.’——
 Thus justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a
 wretch like me; by one such example to secure thou-
 sands from future ruin. ‘Justice and mercy are in
 ‘Heaven the same: its utmost severity is mercy to the
 ‘whole; thereby to cure man’s folly and presumption,
 ‘which else would render even infinite mercy vain and
 ‘ineffectual.’

If any youth, like you, in future times
 Shall mourn my fate, tho' he abhors my crimes;
 Or tender maid, like you, my tale shall hear,
 And to my sorrows give a pitying tear;
 To each such melting eye and throbbing heart,
 Would gracious Heaven this benefit impart,
 Never to know my guilt, nor feel my pain,
 Then must you own you ought not to complain,
 Since you nor weep, nor I shall die in vain.

[*Exeunt.*

‘ SCENE, *the place of execution. The gallows and
 ‘ ladder at the farther end of the stage. A crowd of
 ‘ spectators, Blunt and Lucy.*

‘ *Lucy.* Heavens! what a throng!

‘ *Blunt.* How terrible is death, when thus prepared!

‘ *Lucy.* Support them, Heaven! thou only canst
 support them; all other help is vain.

‘ *Officer.* [*Within.*] Make way there; make way,
 ‘ and give the prisoners room.

‘ *Lucy.* They are here. Observe them well. How
 ‘ humble and composed young Barnwell seems; but
 ‘ Millwood looks wild, ruffled with passion, confound-
 ‘ ed and amazed.

Enter Barnwell, Millwood, Officers, and Executioner.

‘ *Barn.* See, Millwood, see, our journey’s at an
 ‘ end. Life, like a tale that’s told, is passed away.
 ‘ That short, but dark and unknown passage, death,
 ‘ is all the space between us and endless joys, or woes
 ‘ eternal.

‘ *Mill.* Is this the end of all my flattering hopes?
 ‘ Were youth and beauty given me for a curse, and
 ‘ wisdom only to insure my ruin? They were, they
 ‘ were! Heaven, thou hast done thy worst. Or, if
 ‘ thou hast in store some untried plague, somewhat
 ‘ that’s worse than shame, despair, and death, un-
 ‘ pitied death, confirmed despair, and soul-confound-
 ‘ ing shame; something that men and angels can’t
 ‘ describe, and only fiends, who bear it, can con-
 ‘ ceive; now, pour it on this devoted head, that I
 may

' may feel the worst thou can'st inflict, and bid defiance to thy utmost power.

' *Barn.* Yet ere we pass the dreadful gulph of death, yet ere you're plunged in everlasting woe, Oh, bend your stubborn knees and harder heart, humbly to deprecate the wrath divine. Who knows but Heaven, in your dying moments, may bestow that grace and mercy which your life despised!

' *Mill.* Why name you mercy to a wretch like me? Mercy is beyond my hope, almost beyond my wish. I can't repent, nor ask to be forgiven.

' *Barn.* Oh, think what 'tis to be for ever, ever miserable, nor with vain pride oppose a power that's able to destroy you.

' *Mill.* That will destroy me; I feel it will. A deluge of wrath is pouring on my soul. Chains, darkneis, wheels, racks, sharp-stinged scorpions, molten lead, and whole seas of sulphur, are light to what I feel.

' *Barn.* Oh, add not to your vast account despair; a sin more injurious to Heaven, than all you've yet committed.

' *Mill.* Oh, I have sinned beyond the reach of mercy!

' *Barn.* Oh, say not so; 'tis blasphemy to think it. As yon bright roof is higher than the earth, so and much more does Heaven's goodness pass our apprehension. Oh, what created being shall presume to circumscribe mercy that knows no bounds?

' *Mill.* This yields no hope. Though pity may be boundless, yet 'tis free. I was doomed before the world began to endless pains, and thou to joy eternal.

' *Barn.* Oh, gracious Heaven! extend thy pity to her; let thy rich mercy flow in plenteous streams, to chase her fears, and heal her wounded soul.

' *Mill.* It will not be: your prayers are lost in air, or else returned, perhaps, with double blessings to your bosom: they help not me.

' *Barn.* Yet hear me, Millwood.

' *Mill.* Away, I will not hear thee: I tell thee,
' youth,

‘ youth, I am by Heaven devoted a dreadful instance
 ‘ of its power to punish. [Barnwell *seems to pray*.] If
 ‘ thou wilt pray, pray for thyself, not for me. How
 ‘ doth his fervent soul mount with his words, and
 ‘ both ascend to Heaven!—that Heaven, whose gates
 ‘ are shut with adamantine bars against my prayers,
 ‘ had I the will to pray. I cannot bear it! Sure ’tis
 ‘ the worst of torments to behold others enjoy that
 ‘ bliss which we must never taste.

‘ *Officer*. The utmost limit of your time’s expired.

‘ *Mill*. Encompassed with horror, whither must I
 ‘ go? I would not live—nor die —— That I could
 ‘ cease to be —— or ne’er had been!

‘ *Barn*. Since peace and comfort are denied her
 ‘ here, may she find mercy where she least expects it,
 ‘ and this be all her hell! From our example may all
 ‘ be taught to fly the first approach of vice; but if
 ‘ o’ertaken

‘ By strong temptation, weakness, or surprize,

‘ Lament their guilt, and by repentance rise;

‘ Th’ inpenitent alone die unforgiven:

‘ To sin’s like man, and to forgive like Heaven.

‘ *Enter Trueman*.

‘ *Lucy*. Heart-breaking sight! —— Oh, wretched,
 ‘ wretched Millwood!

‘ *Tr*. How is she disposed to meet her fate?

‘ *Blunt*. Who can describe unutterable woe?

‘ *Lucy*. She goes to death encompassed with horror,
 ‘ loathing life, and yet afraid to die. No tongue can
 ‘ tell her anguish and despair.

‘ *Tr*. Heaven be better to her than her fears! May
 ‘ she prove a warning to others, a monument of mercy
 ‘ in herself.

‘ *Lucy*. Oh, sorrow insupportable! Break, break,
 ‘ my heart.

Tr. In vain

With bleeding hearts, and weeping eyes, we show

A humane, gen’rous sense of others woe,

Unless we mark what drew their ruin on,

And, by avoiding that, prevent our own.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by MARIA.

SINCE Fate has robb'd me of the hapless youth,
For whom my heart had boarded up its truth,
By all the laws of love and honour, now,
I'm free again to choose-----and one of you.

But soft-----with caution first I'll round me peep:
Maids in my case should look before they leap.
Here's choice enough, of various sorts and hue,
The cit, the wit, the rake cock'd up in cue,
The fair spruce mercer, and the tawny Jew.

Suppose I search the sober gallery?-----No;
There's none but 'prentices, and cuckolds all-a-row;
And these, I doubt, are those that make 'em so.

[Pointing to the boxes.

'Tis very well, enjoy the jest:-----but you
Fine powdered sparks-----nay, I'm told 'tis true,
Your happy spouses-----can make cuckolds too.
'T'wixt you and them the diff'rence this, perhaps,
The cit's ashamed whenever his duck be'traps;
But you, when madam's tripping, let her fall,
Cock up your hats, and take no shame at all.

What if some favoured poet I could meet,
Whose love would lay his laurels at my feet:
No-----painted passion real love abhors-----
His flame would prove the suit of creditors.

Not to detain you then with longer pause,
In short my heart to this conclusion draws----
I yield it to the hand that's loudest in applause.

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Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Duke of Venice	-	-	-	At DRURY-LANE.
Priuli, father of Belvidera	-	-	-	Mr. CHAPLIN.
Bedamar, the Spanish ambassador	-	-	-	Mr. AICKIN.
Jaffier, married to Belvidera	-	-	-	Mr. R. PALMER.
Pierre, friend to Jaffier	-	-	-	Mr. BRERETON.
Renault,	-	-	-	Mr. BENSLEY.
Elliot,	-	-	-	Mr. PACKER.
Spinosa,	-	-	-	Mr. FAWCET.
Officer,	-	-	-	Mr. WRIGHT.
				Mr. PHILLIMORE.

W O M E N.

Belvidera, daughter to Priuli, married to Jaffier	-	-	Mrs. SIDDONS.
Two Women, Attendants on Belvidera.			
The Council of Ten.			
Officer, Guard, Friar, Executioner, and Rabble.			

The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Line 18, Page 8, to the Middle of Page 9.

P R O L O G U E.

IN these distracted times, when each man dreads
 The bloody stratagems of busy heads:
 When we had fear'd three years we know not what,
 'Till witnesses began to die o'th' rot;
 What made our poet meddle with a plot?
 Was't that he fancy'd for the very sake,
 And name of plot, his trifling play might take?
 For there's not in't one inch-board evidence;
 But 'tis, he says, to reason plain and sense;
 And that he thinks a plausible defence.
 Were truth by sense and reason to be try'd,
 Sure all our swearers might be laid aside.
 No; of such tools our author has no need,
 To make his plot, or make his play succeed;
 He of black bills has no prodigious tales,
 Or Spanish pilgrims cast ashore in Wales:
 Here's not one murder'd magistrate, at least,
 Kept rank, like ven'son for a city feast,
 Grown four days stiff, the better to prepare
 And fit his pliant limbs to ride in chair.
 Yet here's an army rais'd, tho' under ground,
 But no man seen, nor one commission found:
 Here is a traitor too, that's very old,
 Turbulent, subtle, mischievous, and bold,
 Bloody, revengeful, and—to crown his part,
 Loves fumbling with a wench with all his heart:
 'Till, after having many changes past,
 In spite of age (thanks t'heav'n) is hang'd at last;
 Next is a senator that keeps a whore,
 In Venice none a higher office bore,
 To lewdness ev'ry night the letcher ran;
 Shew me, all London, such another man;
 Match him at mother Creiwell's, if you can.
 O Poland! Poland! had it been thy lot
 I've heard in time of this Venetian plot,
 Thou surely chosen hadst one king from thence,
 And honour'd them, as thou hast England since.

VENICE PRESERV'D;

O R,

A PLOT DISCOVER'D.

A C T I.

S C E N E, *a Street in Venice.*

Enter Priuli and Jaffier.

Pri. **N**O more! I'll hear no more! begone and leave me.

Jaff. Not hear me! by my sufferings but you shall!
My lord! my lord! I'm not that abject wretch
You think me. Patience! where's the distance throws
Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, tho' proud oppression will not hear me?

Pri. Have you not wrong'd me?

Jaff. Could my nature e'er
Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrong,
I need not now thus low have bent myself
To gain a hearing from a cruel father.
Wrong'd you!

Pri. Yes, wrong'd me! in the nicest point,
'The honour of my house, you've done me wrong.
You may remember (for now I will speak,
And urge its baseness) when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes as made you look'd on
By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation;
Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you;
Court'd, and sought to raise you to your merits;
My house, my table, nay, my fortune too,
My very self was yours; you might have us'd me
To your best service; like an open friend
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine:
When, in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practis'd to undo me;
Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom.
O! *Belvidera!*

Jaff.

Jaff. 'Tis to me you owe her :
 Childless you had been else, and in the grave
 Your name extinct; no more *Priuli* heard of.
 You may remember, scarce five years are past,
 Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see
 The *Adriatic* wedded by our duke;
 And I was with you: your unskilful pilot
 Dash'd us upon a rock; when to your boat
 You made for safety: enter'd first yourself;
 Th' affrighted *Belvidera*, following next,
 As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
 Was by a wave wash'd off into the deep:
 When instantly I plung'd into the sea,
 And buffeting the billows to her rescue,
 Redeem'd her life with half the loss of mine.
 Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her,
 And with the other dash'd the saucy waves,
 That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my prize.
 I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms:
 Indeed you thank'd me; but a nobler gratitude
 Rose in her soul; for from that hour she lov'd me,
 'Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Pri. You stole her from me; like a thief you stole her,
 At dead of night: that cursed hour you chose
 To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
 May all your joys in her prove false, like mine;
 A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
 Attend you both: continual discord make
 Your days and nights bitter and grievous still:
 May the hard hand of a vexatious need
 Oppress and grind you; till at last you find
 The curse of disobedience all your portion.

Jaff. Half of your curse you have bestow'd in vain;
 Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful loves
 With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty:
 May he live to prove more gentle than his grandfire,
 And happier than his father.

Pri. Rather live
 To bate thee for his bread, and din your ears
 With hungry cries; whilst his unhappy mother
 Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaff. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Pri. 'Twould, by Heav'n!

* Once she was dear indeed; the drops that fell

‘ From my sad heart, when she forgot her duty,
 ‘ The fountain of my life was not so precious—
 ‘ But she is gone, and, if I am a man,
 ‘ I will forget her.’

Jaff. Would I were in my grave!

Pri. And she too with thee:

For, living here, you’re but my curs’d remembrancer.
 I once was happy.

Jaff. You use me thus, because you know my soul
 Is fond of *Belvidera*. You perceive
 My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
 Oh! could my soul ever have found satiety;
 Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
 As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
 But I might send her back to you with contumely,
 And court my fortune where she would be kinder?

Pri. You dare not do’t.

Jaff. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.

My heart, that awes me, is too much my master:
 Three years are past, since first our vows were plighted,
 During which time, the world must bear me witness,
 I’ve treated *Belvidera* like your daughter,
 ‘The daughter of a senator of *Venice*:
 Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
 Due to her birth, she always has commanded.
 Out of my little fortune I’ve done this;
 Because (‘ho’ hopeless e’er to win your nature)
 ‘The world might see I lov’d her for herself;
 Not as the heirs of the great *Priuli*.

Pri. No more.

Jaff. Yes, all, and then adieu for ever.

There’s not a wretch, that lives on common charity,
 But’s happier than me: for I have known
 The luscious sweets of plenty; every night
 Have slept with soft content about my head,
 And never wak’d, but to a joyful morning:
 Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
 Whose blossom ‘scap’d, yet’s wither’d in the ripening.

Pri. Home, and be humble; study to retrench;
 Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
 ‘Those pageants of thy folly:
 Reduce the glitt’ring trappings of thy wife
 To humble weeds, fit for thy little state:
 Then, to some suburb cottage both retire;

Drudge to feed loathsome life; get brats and starve ——
Home, home, I say. [Exit.

Jaff. Yes, if my heart would let me ——
This proud, this swelling heart: home I would go,
But that my doors are hateful to my eyes,
Fill'd and damm'd up with gaping creditors.
I've now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin.
Oh *Belvidera*! Oh! she is my wife ——
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter Pierre.

Pier. My friend, good-morrow,
How fares the honest partner of my heart?
What, melancholy! not a word to spare me!

Jaff. I'm thinking, *Pierre*, how that damn'd starving
Call'd honesty, got footing in the world. [quality,

Pier. Why, powerful villainy first set it up,
For its own ease and safety. Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other; lawyers would want practice,
Cut-throats rewards: each man would kill his brother
Himself; none would be paid or hang'd for murder.
Honesty! 'twas a cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontroll'd above their betters.

Jaff. Then honesty is but a notion?

Pier. Nothing else:

Like wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd:
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't,
'Tis a ragged virtue. Honesty! no more on't.

Jaff. Sure thou art honest?

Pier. So, indeed, men think me;
But they are mistaken, *Jaffier*: I am a rogue
As well as they;
A fine, gay, bold-fac'd villain as thou seest me.
'Tis true, I pay my debts, when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed; I'd not betray my friend
To get his place or fortune; I scorn to flatter

A blown-up fool above, to crush the wretch beneath me ;
Yet, *Jaffier*, for all this I am a villain.

Jaff. A villain !

Pier. Yes, and a most notorious villain ;
'To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,
And own myself a man : to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a shew
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
'They say, by them our hands are free from fetters ;
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds ;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow ;
Drive us, like wrecks, down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold is to save us from destruction.
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at that great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
'That make us slaves, and tell us, 'tis our charter.

' *Jaff.* O *Aquilina* ! Friend, to lose such beauty,
' The dearest purchase of thy noble labours !
' She was thy right by conquest, as by love.

' *Pier.* O *Jaffier* ! I had so fix'd my heart upon her,
' That wheresoe'er I fram'd a scheme of life,
' For time to come, she was my only joy,
' With which I wish'd to sweeten future cares :
' I fancy'd pleasures, none, but one that loves
' And doats as I did, can imagine like 'em :
' When in the extremity of all these hopes,
' In the most charming hour of expectation,
' Then, when our eager wishes soar the highest,
' Ready to swoop and grasp the lovely game,
' A haggard owl, a worthless kite of prey,
' With his foul wings, sail'd in, and spoil'd my quarry.

' *Jaff.* I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou hat'st
him.

' *Pier.* Curse on the common good that's so protected,
' Where every slave, that heaps up wealth enough
' To do much wrong, becomes the lord of right !
' I, who believ'd no ill could e'er come near me,
' Found in the embraces of my *Aquilina*
' A wretched, old, but itching senator ;
' A wealthy fool, that had bought out my title :
' A rogue that uses beauty like a lamb-skin,
' Barely to keep him warm ; that filthy cuckow too

• Was,

' Was, in my absence, crept into my nest,
 ' And spoiling all my brood of noble pleasure.
 ' *Jaff.* Did'st thou not chace him thence?
 ' *Pier.* I did, and drove
 ' The rank old bearded hirco stinking home.
 ' The matter was complain'd of in the senate,
 ' I summon'd to appear, and censur'd basely,
 ' For violating something they call'd privilege—
 ' This was the recompence of all my service:
 ' Would I'd been rather beaten by a coward.
 ' A soldier's mistress, *Jaffier*, is his religion;
 ' When that's profan'd, all other ties are broken:
 ' That even dissolves all former bonds of service;
 ' And from that hour I think myself as free
 ' To be the foe, as e'er the friend of *Venice*—
 ' Nay, dear revenge, whene'er thou call'st, I'm ready.'

Jaff. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
 And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live
 In such a wretched state as this of *Venice*,
 Where all agree to spoil the public good,
 And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.

Pier. We've neither safety, unity, nor peace, my friend,
 For the foundation's lost of common good;
 Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us;
 The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
 Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
 That every day starts up, t'enslave us deeper.
 Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
 To do it right, O *Jaffier*! then might'st thou
 Not wear those seals of woe upon thy face;
 The proud *Priuli* should be taught humanity,
 And learn to value such a son as thou art.
 I dare not speak, but my heart bleeds this moment.

Jaff. Curs'd be the cause, tho' I, thy friend, be part
 Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom, [on't:
 For I am us'd to mis'ry, and perhaps
 May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

Pier. Too soon 'twill reach thy knowledge—

Jaff. Then from thee
 Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship,
 Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
 Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.

Pier. Then, thou art ruin'd!

Jaff. That I long since knew;

I and ill-fortune have been long acquainted.

Pier. I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
'The sons of public rapine were destroying.
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune:
Nay more, *Priuli's* cruel hand had sign'd it.
Here stood a ruffian with an horrid face,
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale;
There was another making villainous jests
At thy undoing: he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings intermix'd and wrought with gold;
The very bed, which on thy wedding-night
Receiv'd thee to the arms of *Belvidera*,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.

Jaff. Now thank Heaven——

Pier. Thank Heaven! for what?

Jaff. That I'm not worth a ducat.

Pier. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of *Venice*,
Where brothers, friends and fathers are all false;
Where there's no truth, no trust; where Innocence
Stoops under vile Oppression, and Vice lords it.
Hast thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous *Belvidera*, like a wretch
'That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping forth,
'Shining thro' tears, like April-suns in showers,
'That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em';
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arm she lean'd,
Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her;
Ev'n the lewd rabble, that were gather'd round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;
Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity;
I could have hugg'd the greasy rogues: they pleas'd me.

Jaff. I thank thee for this story, from my soul;
Since now I know the worst that can befall me.
Ah, *Pierre*! I have a heart that could have borne
'The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me;
But when I think what *Belvidera* feels,
The bitterness her tender spirits taste of,

I own myself a coward : bear my weakness ;
 If, throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
 I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.
 Oh ! I shall drown thee with my sorrows.

Pier. Burn,

First, burn and level *Venice* to thy ruin.
 What ! starve, like beggars brats, in frosty weather,
 Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death !
 'Thou, or thy cause, shall never want assistance,
 Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee :
 Command my heart, thou'rt every way its master.

Jaff. No, there's a secret pride in bravely dying.

Pier. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad ;
 Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow ;
 Revenge, the attribute of gods ; they stamp'd it,
 With their great image, on our natures. Die !
 Consider well the cause, that calls upon thee :
 And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember,
 Thy *Belvidera* suffers ; *Belvidera* !
 Die — damn first — What ! be decently interr'd
 In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust
 With stinking rogues, that rot in dirty winding-sheets,
 Surfeit slain fools, the common dung o'th' soil !

Jaff. Oh !

Pier. Well said, out with't, swear a little —

Jaff. Swear ! By sea and air ; by earth, by Heav'n and
 I will revenge my *Belvidera's* tears. [hell,

Hark thee, my friend — *Priuli* — is — a senator.

Pier. A dog.

Jaff. Agreed.

Pier. Shoot him.

Jaff. With all my heart.

No more ; where shall we meet at night ?

Pier. I'll tell thee ;

On the Rialto, every night at twelve,
 I take my evening's walk of meditation :
 'There we two'll meet, and talk of precious
 Mischief —

Jaff. Farewel.

Pier. At twelve.

Jaff. At any hour ; my plagues
 Will keep me waking. [Exit Pierre.
 Tell me why, good Heaven,
 'Thou mad'dst me what I am, with all the spirit,
 Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,

That fill the happiest man? Ah rather why
 Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,
 Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burthens?
 Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?
 Is this just dealing, Nature? *Belvidera!*

Enter Belvidera.

Poor *Belvidera!*

Bel. Lead me, lead me, my virgins,
 To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge!
 Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face!
 My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
 At sight of thee, and bound with sprightful joys.
 Oh smile! as when our loves were in their spring,
 And chear my fainting soul.

Jaff. As when our loves
 Were in their spring! Has then our fortunes chang'd?
 Art thou not, *Belvidera*, still the same,
 Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?
 If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour?
 Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?

Bel. Does this appear like change, or love decaying,
 When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
 With all the resolution of strong truth!
 Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarm thine
 'To a new charge of blis? I joy more in thee,
 Than did thy mother, when she hugg'd thee first,
 And blest'd the gods for all her travail past.

Jaff. Can there in woman be such glorious faith?
 Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false!
 O woman! lovely woman! Nature made thee
 To temper man: we had been brutes without you!
 Angels are painted fair, to look like you:
 There's in you all that we believe of Heaven;
 Amazing brightness, purity and truth,
 Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

Bel. If love be treasure, we'll be wond'rous rich;
 I have so much, my heart will surely break with't:
 Vows can't express it. When I would declare
 How great's the joy, I'm dumb with the big thought;
 I swell, I sigh, and labour with my longing.
 O! lead me to some desert wide and wild,
 Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
 May have its vent, where I may tell aloud
 To the high heavens, and ev'ry list'ning planet,
 With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;

Where

Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,
Give loose to love, with kisses kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.

Jaff. O *Belvidera* ! doubly I'm a beggar :
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.
Want, worldly want, that hungry meagre fiend,
Is at my heels, and chafes me in view.
Can'st thou bear cold and hunger ? Can these limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty ?
When banish'd by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out
In some far climate, where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour ; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads ;
Wilt thou then talk thus to me ? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love ?

Bel. Oh ! I will love thee, even in madness love thee ;
Tho' my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals when my poor heart
Should 'swage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Tho' the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some cleft our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thine head ;
And as thou sighing ly'st, and swell'd with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest ;
Then praise our gods, and watch thee till the morning.

Jaff. Hear this, you Heav'ns, and wonder how you
made her !

Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world,
Busy religion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine ;
Like gaudy ships, the obsequious billows fall,
And rise again, to lift you in your pride ;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you :
I in my private bark already wreck'd,
Like a poor merchant driven to unknown land,
That had by chance pack'd up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and sav'd only that ;
Since I must wander farther on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store,
Resolv'd to scorn, and trust my fate no more.

}
[Ex.]
A C T

A C T II.

‘ *Enter Pierre and Aquilina.*

‘ *Aqui.* **B**Y all thy wrongs, thou’rt dearer to my arms
 ‘ Than all the wealth of *Venice*. Prithee stay,
 ‘ And let us love to-night.

‘ *Pier.* No : there’s fool,
 ‘ There’s fool about thee. When a woman sells
 ‘ Her flesh to fools, her beauty’s lost to me ;
 ‘ They leave a tainted sully, where they’ve pass’d ;
 ‘ There’s such a baneful quality about ’em,
 ‘ E’en spoils complexions with their nauseousness ;
 ‘ They infect all they touch : I cannot think
 ‘ Of tasting any thing that a fool has pall’d. [much

‘ *Aqui.* I loath and scorn that fool thou mean’st, as
 ‘ Or more than thou can’st ; but the beast has gold,
 ‘ That makes him necessary ; power too,
 ‘ To qualify my character, and poise me
 ‘ Equal with peevish virtue, that beholds
 ‘ My liberty with envy. In their hearts
 ‘ They’re loose as I am ; but an ugly power
 ‘ Sits in their faces, and frights pleasures from them.

‘ *Pier.* Much good may’t do you, madam, with your
 senator.

‘ *Aqui.* My senator ! Why, can’st thou think that
 wretch
 ‘ E’er fill’d thy *Aquilina*’s arms with pleasure ?
 ‘ Think’st thou, because I sometimes give him leave
 ‘ To foil himself at what he is unfit for ;
 ‘ Because I force myself t’endure and suffer him,
 ‘ Think’st thou I love him ? No, by all the joys
 ‘ Thou ever gav’st me, his presence is my penance.
 ‘ The worst thing an old man can be’s a lover,
 ‘ A mere *memento mori* to poor woman.
 ‘ I never lay by his decrepid side,
 ‘ But all that night I ponder on my grave.

‘ *Pier.* Would he were well sent thither.

‘ *Aqui.* That’s my wish too : [sure,
 ‘ For then, my *Pierre*, I might have cause, with plea-
 ‘ To play the hypocrite. Oh ! how I could weep
 ‘ Over the dying dotard, and kiss him too,
 ‘ In hopes to smother him quite ; then, when the time
 ‘ Was come to pay my sorrows at his funeral,

‘ (For

' (For he has already made me heir to treasures
 ' Would make me out-act a real widow's whining)
 ' How could I frame my face to fit my mourning !
 ' With wringing hands attend him to his grave ;
 ' Fall swooning on his hearse ; take mad possession
 ' E'en of the dismal vault where he lay buried ;
 ' There, like th' *Ephesian* matron, dwell till thou,
 ' My lovely soldier, com'st to my deliverance ;
 ' Then throwing up my veil, with open arms
 ' And laughing eyes, run to new dawning joy.

' *Pier.* No more : I've friends to meet me here to-
 night,

' And must be private. As you prize my friendship,
 ' Keep up your coxcomb ; let him not pry, nor listen,
 ' Nor frisk about the house, as I have seen him,
 ' Like a tame mumping squirrel with a bell on :
 ' Curs will be abroad to bite him, if you do.
 ' *Aqui.* What friends to meet ! Mayn't I be of your
 council ?

' *Pier.* How ! a woman ask questions out of bed !
 ' Go to your senator ; ask him what passes
 ' Amongst his brethren : he'll hide nothing from you :
 ' But pump not me for politicks. No more !
 ' Give order, that whoever in my name
 ' Comes here, receive admittance. So good night.
 ' *Aqui.* Must we ne'er meet again ! embrace no more ?
 ' Is love so soon and utterly forgotten ?

' *Pier.* As you henceforward treat your fool, I'll
 think on't.

' *Aqui.* Curs'd be all fools, and doubly curs'd myself,
 ' The worst of fools—I die if he forsake me ;
 ' And how to keep him, Heaven or hell instruct me. [*Ex.*

S C E N E, *the Rialto.* Enter *Jaffier*.

Jaff. I'm here ; and thus, the shades of night around
 I look as if all hell were in my heart, [me,
 And I in hell. Nay, surely 'tis so with me !——
 For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
 Knocks at my breast, and bids it not be quiet.
 I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,
 Have wander'd out at this dead time of night,
 To meet the foe of mankind in his walk,
 Sure I'm so curs'd, that, tho' of Heav'n forsaken,
 No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
 Hell, hell ! why sleep'st thou ?

Enter

Enter Pierre.

Pier. Sure I've staid too long :
The clock has struck, and I may lose my profelyte.
Speak, who goes there ?

Jaff. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon. What's he, that asks the question ?

Pier. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,
And ne'er betray their masters ; never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend *Jaffier* !

Jaff. The same. ' O *Pierre*, thou'rt come in season,
' I was just going to pray.

Pier. ' Ah ! that's mechanic ;
' Priests make a trade on't, and yet starve by't, too.
' No praying ; it spoils business, and time's precious.'
Where's *Belvidera* ?——

Jaff. For a day or two
I've lodg'd her privately, till I see farther
What Fortune will do with me. Prithce, friend,
If thou would'st have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of *Belvidera*——

Pier. Speak not of her ?

Jaff. Oh, no !

Pier. Nor name her ? May be I wish her well.

Jaff. Whom well ?

Pier. Thy wife ; thy lovely *Belvidera*.
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done.

Jaff. Y' are merry, *Pierre*.

Pier. I am so :
Thou shalt smile too, and *Belvidera* smile :
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins ;
Marriage is chargeable. [Gives him a purse.]

Jaff. I but half wish'd
To see the devil, and he's here already. Well !
What must this buy ? Rebellion, murder, treason ?
Tell me which way I must be damn'd for this.

Pier. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these.
But entertain'd each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reform'd since our last meeting ? What new miracles
Have happen'd ? Has *Priuli*'s heart relented ?
Can he, be honest ?

Jaff. Kind Heav'n, let heavy curses
Gall his old age ; cramps ; aches rack his bones,

And

And bitterest disquiet wring his heart.

‘ Oh ! let him live, till life becomes his burden ;

‘ Let him groan under’t long. Linger an age

‘ In the worst agonies and pangs of death,

‘ And find its ease, but late.’

Pier. Nay, could’st thou not

As well, my friend, have stretch’d the curse to all

The senate round, as to one single villain ?

Jaff. But curses stick not ; could I kill with cursing,

By Heaven I know not thirty heads in *Venice*

Should not be blasted. Senators should rot

Like dogs on dunghills : ‘ But their wives and daughters

‘ Die of their own diseases.’ Oh ! for a curse

To kill with !

Pier. Daggers, daggers are much better.

Jaff. Ha !

Pier. Daggers.

Jaff. But where are they ?

Pier. Oh ! a thousand

May be dispos’d of, in honest hands in *Venice*.

Jaff. Thou talk’st in clouds.

Pier. But yet a heart, half wrong’d

As thine has been, would find the meaning, *Jaffier*.

Jaff. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands !

And have I not a friend will stick one here ?

Pier. Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherish’d

T’ a nobler purpose, I would be that friend ;

But thou hast better friends ; friends whom thy wrongs

Have made thy friends ; friends worthy to be call’d so.

I’ll trust thee with a secret : There are spirits

This hour at work.—But as thou’rt a man,

Whom I have pick’d and chosen from the world,

Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter ;

And when I’ve told thee that which only gods,

And men like gods, are privy to, then swear

No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.

Jaff. When thou would’st bind me, is there need of
oaths ? [counters ;’

‘ Green-sickness girls lose maidenheads with such

For thou’rt so near my heart, that thou may’st see

Its bottom, sound its strength and firmness to thee.

Is coward, fool, or villain in my face ?

If I seem none of these, I dare believe

Thou would’st not use me in a little cause ;

For

For I am fit for honour's roughest task ;
 Nor ever yet found fooling was my province :
 And for a villainous, inglorious enterprise,
 I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
 Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.

Pier. Nay, 'tis a cause I will be fond of, *Jaffier* ;
 For it is founded on the noblest basis ;
 Our liberties, our natural inheritance.
 There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't ;
 We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't ;
 Openly act a deed the world may gaze
 With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaff. For liberty !

Pier. For liberty, my friend.
 Thou shalt be freed from base *Priuli's* tyranny,
 And thy sequester'd fortunes heal'd again :
 I shall be free from those opprobrious wrongs,
 That press me now, and bend my spirit downward ;
 All *Venice* free, and every growing merit
 Succeed to its just rights : fools shall be pull'd -
 From Wisdom's seat ; those baleful unclean birds,
 Those lazy owls, who (perch'd near Fortune's top)
 Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
 To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
 To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.

Jaff. What can I do ?

Pier. Can'st thou not kill a senator ?

Jaff. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him,
 For herding with that nest of fools or knaves.
 By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
 Were to be had ; and the brave story warms me.

Pier. Swear then !

Jaff. I do, by all those glittering stars,
 And yon great ruling planet of the night ;
 By all good powers above, and ill below ;
 By love and friendship, dearer than my life,
 No pow'r or death shall make me false to thee.

Pier. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
 A council's held hard by, where the destruction
 Of this great empire's hatching : there I'll lead thee.
 But be a man ! for thou'rt to mix with men
 Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
 And rule it when 'tis wildest.

Jaff. I give thee thanks

For this kind warning. Yes, I'll be a man ;
 And charge thee, *Pierre*, whene'er thou see'st my fears
 Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
 Out of my breast, and shew it for a coward's.
 Come, let's begone, for from this hour I chace
 All little thoughts, all tender human follies
 Out of my bosom : Vengeance shall have room :
 Revenge !

Pier. And liberty !

Jaff. Revenge !

Pier. And liberty !

Jaff. Revenge ! revenge ! ————— [Exeunt.

The SCENE changes to Aquilina's house, the Greek
courtesan.

Enter Renault.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition ? the worst
 ground

A wretch can build on ! 'tis, indeed, at distance,
 A goodly prospect, tempting to the view ;
 The height delights us, and the mountain top
 Looks beautiful, because 'tis high to Heav'n ;
 But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
 What storms will batter, and what tempests shake us.
 Who's there ?

Enter Spinosa.

Spin. *Renault*, good-morrow, for by this time
 I think the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
 And weighs up morning ? Has the clock struck twelve ?

Ren. Yes ; clocks will go as they are set : but man,
 Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain :
 I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
 In waiting dull attendance ; 'tis the curse
 Of diligent virtue to be mix'd, like mine,
 With giddy tempers, souls but half resolv'd.

Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten.

Ren. What's then the cause that I am here alone ?
 Why are we not together ?

Enter Elliot.

O, sir, welcome !

You are an Englishman : when treason's hatching,
 One might have thought you'd not have been behind-
 In what whore's lap have you been lolling ? [hand.
 Give but an *Englishman* his whore and ease,
 Beef and a few coal fire, he's yours for ever.

Ell.

Ell. Frenchman, you are saucy.

Ren. How!

Enter Bedamar the Ambassador, Theodore, Bramveil, Durand, Brabe, Revillido, Mezzana, Ternon, Retrosi, Conspirators.

Bed. At difference; fie!

Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl: should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly as in one great jewel,
To adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on;
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles?

Ren. Boys!

Bed. Renault, thy hand.

Ren. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

Bed. Elliot, thou once hadst virtue. I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with god-like goodness,
Not half thus courted: 'Tis thy nation's glory
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
One more embrace, my friends—we'll all take hands.
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist the rooted empire from its basis.
Totters it not already?

Ell. Would 'twere tumbling.

Bed. Nay, it shall down! this night we seal its ruin.

Enter Pierre.

O *Pierre*! thou art welcome.
Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovely dreadfull; and the fate of *Venice*
Seems on thy sword already. O my *Mars*!
The poets that first feign'd a god of war,
Sure prophesy'd of thee.

Pier. Friend, was not *Brutus*,
(I mean that *Brutus*, who in open senate
Stabb'd the first *Cæsar* that usurp'd the world)
A gallant man?

Ren. Yes, and *Cataline* too;
Tho' story wrongs his fame: for he conspir'd
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.

Bed.

Bed. And ours as much above it,
As *Renault*, thou'rt superior to *Cethegus*,
Or *Pierre* to *Cassius*.

Pier. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

Bed. No, *Pierre*, the deed's near birth; fate seems to
have set
The business up, and given it to our care;
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us,
But what is firm and ready.

All. All.
We'll die with *Bedamar*.

Bed. O men,
Matchless! as will your glory be hereafter:
The game is for a matchless prize, if won:
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

Ren. Who can lose it?
' The public stock's a beggar: one *Venetian*
' Trusts not another. Look into their stores
' Of general safety; empty magazines,
' A tatter'd fleet, a murmuring unpaid army,
' Bankrupt nobility, a harra's'd commonalty,
' A factious, giddy, and divided senate,
' Is all the strength of *Venice*: let's destroy it:
' Let's fill their magazines with arms to awe them;
' Man out their fleet, and make their trade maintain it;
' Let loose their murmuring army on their masters
' To pay themselves with plunder; lop their nobles
' To the base roots whence most of them first sprung;
' Enslave the rout, whom smarting will make humble;
' Turn out that droning senate, and possess
' That seat of empire which our souls were fram'd for.

Pier. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world:
This wretched state has starv'd them in its service;
And by your bounty quicken'd, they're resolv'd
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for the alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

Bed. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence
Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease;
After this night it is resolv'd we meet
No more, till *Venice* owns us for her lords.

Pier. How lovely the *Adriatic* whore,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine? Devouring flames!
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

Bed. Now if any
Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told: the general doom is seal'd;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

Pier. I must confess, you there have touch'd my
I have a friend; hear it! such a friend, [weakness.
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I tell you
He knows the very business of this hour;
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it:
We've chang'd a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

Ren. How! all betray'd!

Pier. No—I've dealt nobly with you,
I've brought my all into the public stock:
I'd but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you:
Receive and cherish him; or if, when seen
And search'd, you find him worthless; as my tongue
Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears, I wear a dagger here
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter Jaffier, with a dagger.

Bed. His presence bears the shew of manly virtue.

Jaff. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncall'd
I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
But I'm amongst you, and by Heav'n it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast; but, if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the curs'd assembled senate:
It shrinks not, tho' I meet a father there.
Would you behold this city flaming? here's
A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To th' arsenal, and set its gates on fire.

Ren. You talk this well, sir,

Jaff. Nay—by Heaven I'll do this.

Come,

Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces :
 You fear me villain, and indeed it's odd
 To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
 Of matters that have been so well debated ;
 But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with councils.
 I hate this senate, am a foe to *Venice* ;
 A friend to none, but men resolv'd like me
 To push on mischief. Oh ! did you but know me,
 I need not talk thus !

Bed. Pierre, I must embrace him,
 My heart beats to this man, as if it knew him.

Ren I never lov'd these huggers.

Jaff. Still I see

The cause delights ye not. Your friends survey me
 As I were dangerous ——— But I come arm'd
 Against all doubts, and to your trusts will give
 A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.
 My *Belvidera*. Ho ! my *Belvidera* !

Bed. What wonder next ?

Jaff. Let me intreat you,
 As I have henceforth hoped to call you friends,
 That all but the ambassador, and this
 Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,
 Withdraw a while, to spare a woman's blushes

[*Exeunt all but Bed. Ren. Jaff. Pier.*]

Bed. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us ?

Jaff. My *Belvidera* ! *Belvidera* !

Enter Belvidera.

Bel. Who,

Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour ?
 That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
 And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.
 Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou ?

Jaff. Indeed 'tis late.

Bel. Oh ! I have slept and dreamt,

' And dreamt again. Where hast thou been, thou loiterer ?
 ' Tho' my eyes clos'd, my arms have still been open'd :
 ' Stretch'd every way betwixt my broken slumbers,
 ' To search if thou wer't come to crown my rest :
 ' There's no repose without thee . oh ! the day
 ' Too soon will break, and wake us to our sorrow.
 ' Come, come to bed, and bid thy cares good night.

' *Jaff.* O *Belvidera* ! we must change the scene,
 ' In which the past delights of life were tasted :

' The

' The poor sleep little ; we must learn to watch
 ' Our labours late, and early every morning ;
 ' 'Midst winter frosts, thin clad and fed with sparing,
 ' Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day.

Bel. Alas ! where am I ! whither is't you lead me ?
 Methinks I read distraction in your face,
 Something less gentle than the fate you tell me.
 You shake and tremble too ! your blood runs cold !
 Heav'n's guard my love, and bless his heart with patience.

Jaff. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
 Who has ordain'd it so, that thou and I,
 (Thou, the divinest good man e'er possess'd,
 And I, the wretched'st of the race of man)
 This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Bel. Part ! must we part ? Oh, am I then forsaken ?
 ' Will my love cast me off ? Have my misfortunes
 ' Offended him so highly, that he'll leave me ?'
 Why drag you from me ; whither are you going ?
 My dear ! my life ! my love !

Jaff. O, friend !

Bel. Speak to me.

Jaff. Take her from my heart.
 She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
 I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care
 Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.

Ren. Rise, madam, and command amongst your servants.

Jaff. To you, sir, and your honour, I bequeath her,
 And with her this ; when I prove unworthy—

[Gives a dagger.

You know the rest ——— Then strike it to her heart ;
 And tell her, he who three whole happy years
 Lay in her arms, and every night repeated
 The passionate vows still of increasing love,
 Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

' *Bel.* Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply ;
 ' Or send me to some distant clime your slave,
 ' But let it be far off, lest my complainings
 ' Should reach his guilty ears, and shake his peace.

' *Jaff.* No, *Belvidera*, I've contriv'd thy honour.
 ' Trust to my faith, and be but fortune kind
 ' To me, as I'll preserve that faith unbroken ;
 ' When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a height
 ' Shall gather all the gazing world about thee,
 ' To wonder what strange virtue plac'd thee there.
 ' But, if we ne'er meet more' ———

Bel.

Bel. O! thou unkind one;
 Ne'er meet more! have I deserv'd this from you?
 Look on me, tell me, speak, thou dear deceiver,
 Why am I separated from thy love?
 If I am false, accuse me, but if true,
 Don't, pitihee don't, in poverty forsake me,
 But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting.
 Yet hear me! yet recall me— [*Ex. Ren. Bed. and Belv.*]

Jaff. 'O my eyes, my heart-strings!
 'Look not that way, but turn yourselves a while
 'Into my heart, and be wean'd altogether.'
 My friend, where art thou?

Pier. Here, my honour's brother.

Jaff. Is *Belvidera* gone?

Pier. *Renault* has led her
 Back to her own apartment; but, by Heav'n,
 'Thou must not see her more, 'till our work's over.

Jaff. Not see her!

Pier. Not for your life.

Jaff. O *Pierre*, were she but here,
 How I would pull her down into my heart,
 Gaze on her, till my eye-strings crack'd with love;
 'Till all my sinews, with its fire extended,
 'Fix'd me upon the rack of ardent longing.'
 Then, swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,
 Come, like a panting turtle, to her breast;
 On her soft bosom hovering, bill and play,
 Confess the cause why last I fled away;
 Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,
 And never follow false ambition more. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

'Enter *Aquilina* and her maid.

'*Aqui.* **T**ELL him I am gone to bed; tell him I am
 'not at homè; tell him I've better com-
 'pany with me, or any thing; tell him, in short, I will
 'not see him, the eternal troublesome vexatious fool:
 'he's worse company than an ignorant physician—I'll not
 'be disturb'd at these unreasonable hours.

'*Maid.* But, Madam! he's here already, just enter'd
 'the door.

B

'*Aqui.*

' *Aqui.* Turn him out again, you unnecessary, useless, giddy-brain'd ass: if he will not be gone, set the house a fire, and burn us both: I'd rather meet a toad in my dish, than an old hideous animal in my chamber to-night.

' *Enter Antonio.*

' *Ant.* Nacky, Nacky, Nacky ——— how dost do, Nacky? Hurry, durry. I am come, little Nacky: past eleven o'clock, a late hour; time in all conscience to go to bed, Nacky ——— Nacky, did I say? Ah, Nacky, Aquilina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina, quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky, queen Nacky ——— come, let's to bed ——— you subbs, you pug you ——— you little puss ——— Purree, Tuzzy — I am a senator.

' *Aqui.* You are a fool, I am sure.

' *Ant.* May be so too, sweetheart: never the worse senator for all that. Come, Nacky, Nacky, let's have a game at romps, Na ky.

' *Aqui.* You would do well, signor, to be troublesome here no longer, but leave me to myself; be sober, and go home, sir.

' *Ant.* Home, Madona!

' *Aqui.* Ay, home, sir. Who am I?

' *Ant.* Madona, as I take it, you are my ——— you are ——— thou art my little Nicky Nacky ——— that's all.

' *Aqui.* I find you are resolv'd to be troublesome; and so, to make short of the matter in few words, I hate you, detest you, loath you, I am weary of you, sick of you — hang you, you are an old, silly, impertinent, impotent, solicitous coxcomb: crazy in your head, and lazy in your body; love to be meddling with every thing, and, if you had no money, you are good for nothing.

' *Ant.* Good for nothing! Hurry durry, I'll try that presently. Sixty-one years old, and good for nothing! that's brave: [*To the maid.*] Come, come, come Mrs. Fiddle-fiddle, turn you out for a season: go, turn out, I say, it is our will and pleasure to be private some moments — out, out, when you are bid to — [*Puts her out, and locks the door*] Good for nothing, you say?

' *Aqui.* Why, what are you good for?

' *Ant.* In the first place, madam, I am old, and consequently very wise, very wise, Madona, d'ye mark that? In the second place, take notice, if you please, that I am a senator; and, when I think fit, can make speeches,

' speeches, Madona. Hurry durry, I can make a speech
' in the senate-house, now and then — would make your
' hair stand an end, Madona.

' *Aqui.* What care I for your speeches in the senate-
' house ; if you would but be silent here, I should thank
' you.

' *Ant.* Why I can make speeches to thee too, my lovely
' Madona ; for example—My cruel fair one, [*Takes out a*
' *purse, and at every pause shakes it*] since it is my fate,
' that you should, with your servant, angry prove ; though
' late at night—I hope 'tis not too late with this, to gain
' reception for my love——There's for thee, my little
' Nicky Nacky—take it, here take it—I say take it, or
' I'll throw it at your head—how now, rebel ?

' *Aqui.* Truly, my illustrious senator, I must confess
' your honour is at present most profoundly eloquent
' indeed.

' *Ant.* Very well : come, now let's sit down, and think
' upon't a little—come, sit, I say—sit down by me a lit-
' tle, my Nicky Nacky.— [*Sits down.*] Hurry durry—
' good for nothing—

' *Aqui.* No, sir, if you please, I can know my distance,
' and stand.

' *Ant.* Stand ! how, Nacky up, and I down ? Nay
' then, let me exclaim with the poet,

' Shew me a case more pitiful who can,

' A standing woman and a falling man.

' Hurry durry—not sit down—see this, ye gods !

' You won't sit down ?

' *Aqui.* No, sir.

' *Ant.* Then look you, now ; suppose me a bull, a
' basan-bull, the bull of bulls, or any bull. Thus up I
' get, and with my brows, thus bent—I broo, I say,
' I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down, will you ?
' — I broo —

' [*Bel lows like a bull, and drives her about.*

' *Aqui.* Well, sir, I must endure this. [*She sits down.*]
' Now your honour has been a bull, pray what beast will
' your worship please to be next ?

' *Ant.* Now I'll be a senator again, and thy lover,
' little Nicky Nacky. [*He sits by her.*] Ah ! toad, toad,
' toad, toad ! spit in my face a little, Nacky, spit in
' my face, prithee, spit in my face never so little : spit
' but a little bit —— spit, spit, spit, spit, when you are

' bid, I say; do prithee spit — now, now, now, spit;
' what, you won't spit, will you? then I'll be a dog.

' *Aqui.* A dog, my lord!

' *Ant.* Ay a dog—and I'll give thee this t'other purse,
' to let me be a dog—and use me like a dog a little,
' Hurry durry—I will—here 'tis— [*Gives the purse.*

' *Aqui.* Well, with all my heart. But let me beseech
' your dogship, to play your tricks over as fast as you can,
' that you may come to stinking the sooner, and be turn'd
' out of doors, as you deserve.

' *Ant.* Ay, ay—no matter for that—that shan't move—
' [*He gets under the table.*] Now, bough, waugh, waugh,
' bough, waugh.— [*Barks like a dog.*

' *Aqui.* Hold, hold, hold, sir, I beseech you: what is't
' you do? If curs bite, they must be kick'd, sir: Do you
' see, kick'd thus.

' *Ant.* Ay, with all my heart: do, kick, kick on;
' now I am under the table, kick again, kick harder—
' harder yet, bough, waugh, waugh, waugh, bough. Odd,
' I'll have a snap at thy shins—bough, waugh waugh
' waugh, bough—odds, she kicks bravely—

' *Aqui.* Nay, then I'll go another way to work with
' you: and I think here's an instrument fit for the pur-
' pose. [*Fitches a whip and a tail.*

' What, bite your mistress, sirrah? out of doors you dog,
' to kennel, and be hang'd — bite your mistress by the
' legs, you rogue — [*She whips him.*

' *Ant.* Nay, prithee Nacky, now thou art too loving:
' Hurry durry, odd, I'll be a dog no longer.

' *Aqui.* Nay, none of your sawning and grinning: but
' be gone, or here's the discipline. What, bite your
' mistress by the leg, you mungrel? Out of doors—hout,
' hout, to kennel, sirrah, go.

' *Ant.* This is very barbarous usage, Nacky, very bar-
' barous; look you, I will not go—I will not stir from
' the door, that I resolve — hurry durry, what shut me
' out? [*She whips him out.*

' *Aqui.* Ay, if you come here any more to-night, I'll
' have my footman lug you, you cur! What, bite your
' poor mistress Nacky, sirrah?

' *Enter Maid.*

' *Maid.* Heav'ns! madam, what's the matter?

[*He howls at the door like a dog.*

' *Aqui.* Call my footmen hither presently.

‘ *Enter two Footmen.*

‘ *Maid.* They’re here already, madam; all the house is alarm’d with a strange noise, that no-body knows what to make of.

‘ *Aqui.* Go, all of you, and turn that troublesome beast in the next room out of my house—It ever I see him within these walls again, without my leave for his admittance, you sneaking rogues—I’ll have you poison’d, all poison’d like rats; every corner of the house shall stink of one of you; go, and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. So; now for my *Pierre*.

‘ Thus, when the god-like lover is displeas’d,

‘ We sacrifice our fool, and he’s appear’d. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE a chamber. *Enter Belvidera.*

Bel. I’m sacrific’d! I’m sold! betray’d to shame!
Inevitable ruin has inclos’d me!

‘ No sooner was I to my bed repair’d,
‘ To weigh and (weeping) ponder my condition;
‘ But the old hoary wretch, to whose false care
‘ My peace and honour was entrusted, came,
‘ (Like *Tarquin*) ghastly, with infernal lust.
‘ O thou *Roman Lucretia*!
‘ Thou could’st find friends, to vindicate thy wrong?
‘ I never had but one, and he’s prov’d false:
He that should guard my virtue, has betray’d it;
Left me! undone me! Oh, that I could hate him!
Where shall I go? Oh, whither, whither wander?

Enter Jaffier.

Jaff. Can *Belvidera* want a resting-place,
When these poor arms are ready to receive her?
‘ Oh! ’tis in vain to struggle with desires.
‘ Strong is my love to thee; for, every moment
‘ I’m from thy sight, the heart within my bosom
‘ Mourns like a tender infant in its cradle,
‘ Whose nurse has left it. Come, and with the songs
‘ Of gentle love, persuade it to its peace.

‘ *Bel.* I fear the stubborn wanderer will not own me;
‘ ’Tis grown a rebel, to be rul’d no longer;
‘ Scorns the indulgent bosom, that first lull’d it;
‘ And, like a disobedient child, disdains
‘ The soft authority of *Belvidera*.

‘ *Jaff.* There was a time——

Bel. Yes, yes, there was a time,
When *Belvidera*’s tears, her cries, and sorrows,

Were not despis'd; when, if she chanc'd to sigh,
Or look but sad——there was indeed a time,
When *Jaffier* would have ta'en her in his arms,
Pas'd her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her, till he found the cause.

• But let her now weep seas;
• Cry, till she rend the earth; sigh, till she burst
• Her heart asunder; still he bears it all,
• Deaf as the wind, and as the rocks unshaken.

• *Jaff.* Have I been deaf? Am I that rock unmov'd,
• Against whose root tears beat, and sighs are sent
• In vain? Have I beheld thy sorrows calmly!
• Witness against me, Heavens, have I done this?
• Then bear me in a whirlwind back again,
• And let that angry dear one ne'er forgive me.
• Oh! thou too rashly censur'st of my love;
• Couldst thou but think how I have spent this night,
• Dark, and alone, no pillow to my head,
• Rest in my eyes, nor quiet in my heart,
• Thou wouldst not, *Belvidera*, sure thou wouldst not
• Talk to me thus; but like a pitying angel,
• Spreading thy wings, come settle on my breast,
• And hatch warm comforts there, ere sorrows freeze it.

• *Bel.* Why then, poor mourner, in what baleful corner
• Hast thou been talking with that witch, the night?
• On what cold stone hast thou been stretch'd along,
• Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
• To mix with theirs the accent of my woes?
• Oh! now I find the cause my love forsakes me:
• I am no longer fit to bear a share
• In his concernments. My weak female virtue
• Must not be trusted: 'Tis too frail and tender.'

Jaff. O *Portia*, *Portia*! What a soul was thine!

Bel. That *Portia* was a woman; and when *Brutus*,
Big with the fate of *Rome*, (Heav'n guard thy safety!)
Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind;
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles as his love.
Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
Thou gav'st last night in parting with me; strike it
Here to my heart; and, as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as *Cato's* daughter's.

• *Jaff.* Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy.

• Unworthy

Unworthy so much virtue. Teach me how
 I may deserve such matchless love as thine,
 And see with what attention I'll obey thee.

Bel. Do not despise me : that's the all I ask.

Jaff. Despise thee ! Hear me—

Bel. Oh ! thy charming tongue

Is but too well acquainted with my weakness ;
 Knows, let it name but love, my melting heart
 Dissolve within my breast ; till with clos'd eyes
 I reel into thy arms, and all's forgotten.

Jaff. What shall I do ?

Bel. Tell me ; be just, and tell me,

Why dwells that busy cloud upon thy face ?
 Why am I made a stranger ? Why that sigh,
 And I not know the cause ? Why, when the world
 Is wrapp'd in rest, why chuses then my love
 To wander up and down in horrid darkness,
 Loathing his bed, and these desiring arms ?
 Why are these eyes blood-shot with tedious watching ?
 Why starts he now, and looks as if he wish'd
 His fate were finish'd ? Tell me, ease my fear ;
 Lest, when we next time meet, I want the power
 To search into the sickness of thy mind,
 But talk as wildly then, as thou look'st now.

Jaff. O *Belvidera* !

Bel. Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain ?

Jaff. Ha ! a villain ?

Bel. Yes, to a villain ! Why at such an hour
 Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches,
 That look as hell had drawn them into league ?
 Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
 Was I deliver'd with dreadful ceremonies ?
To you, sir, and to your honour I bequeath her,
And with her this : Whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart.
 Oh ! why's that rest conceal'd from me ? Must I
 Be made the hostage of a hellish trust ?
 For such I know I am ; that's all my value.
 But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
 I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves ;
 Straight to the senate, tell 'em all I know,
 All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

Jaff. Is this the *Roman* virtue ; this the blood
 That boasts its purity with *Caio's* daughter ?

Would she have e'er betray'd her *Brutus*?

Bel. No:

For *Brutus* trusted her Wert thou so kind,

What would not *Belvidera* suffer for thee?

Jaff. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.

Bel. Look not upon me as I am, a woman,

'But as a bone, thy wife, thy friend; who long

'Has had admission to thy heart, and there

'Study'd the virtues of thy gallant nature.

'Thy constancy, thy courage, and thy truth,

'Have been my daily lesson: I have learn'd 'em.

'And, bold as thou, can suffer or despise

'The worst of fates for thee, and with thee share 'em.

Jaff. O, thou divinest power! look down, and hear

'My prayers! instruct me to reward this virtue!"

Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further;

Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature,

Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of,

Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:

'Then, if thou should'st betray me!——

Bel. Shall I swear?

Jaff. No, do not swear: I would not violate

Thy tender nature with so rude a bond;

But as thou hop'st to see me live my days,

And love thee long, lock this within thy breast:

I've bound myself, by all the strictest sacraments,

Divine and human——

Bel. Speak!

Jaff. To kill thy father——

Bel. My father!

Jaff. Nay, the throats of the whole senate

Shall bleed, my *Belvidera*. He amongst us,

'That spares his father, brother, or his friend,

Is damn'd, 'How rich and beauteous will the face

'Of ruin look, when these wide streets run blood!

'I, and the glorious partners of my fortune,

'Shouting, and striding o'er the prostrate dead,

'Still to new waste; whilst thou, far off in safety,

'Smiling, shalt see the wonders of our daring;

'And, when night comes, with praise and love receive

'me.'

Bel. Oh!

Jaff. Have a care, and shrink not even in thought:

For if thou do'st——

Bel.

Bel. I know it; thou wilt kill me.
 Do, strike this sword into this bosom: lay me
 Dead on the earth, then thou wilt be safe.
 Murder my father! Tho' his cruel nature
 Has persecuted me to my undoing;
 Driven me to basest wants; can I behold him,
 With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?
 The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd?
 And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being?
 Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
 Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
 Mix with hir'd slaves, bravoës, and common stabbers,
 'Nose-flitters, alley-lurking villains!' join
 With such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
 To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

Jaff. Thou wrong'st me, *Belvidera*! I've engag'd
 With men of souls; fit to reform the ills
 Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them
 But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
 Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.

Bel. What's he, to whose curs'd hands last night thou
 gav'st me?

Was that well done! Oh! I could tell a story,
 Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,
 And make it rage with terrifying fury.

Jaff. Speak on, I charge thee.

Bel. O my love! if e'er

Thy *Belvidera*'s peace deserv'd thy care,
 Remove me from this place. Last night! last night!

Jaff. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

Bel. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,

I left in the power of that old son of mischief;
 No sooner was I laid on my sad bed,
 But that vile wretch approach'd me, loose, 'unbutton'd,
 'Ready for violation:' Then my heart
 Throbb'd with its fears: Oh, how I wept and sigh'd!
 And shrank and trembled! wish'd in vain for him
 That should protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.

Jaff. Patience, sweet Heav'n, till I make vengeance
 sure.

Bel. He drew the hideous dagger forth, thou gav'st him,
 And, with upbraiding smiles, he said, *Behold it:*

This is the pledge of a false husband's love:

And in my arms then press'd, and would have clasp'd me;

But with my cries, I fear'd his coward heart,
 'Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell.
 These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honour,
 Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.

Jaff. No more: I charge thee keep this secret close.
 Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs
 Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
 As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
 Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
 I'll heal his failings, and deserve thy love.

Bel. Oh! should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
 In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaff. Return no more! I would not live without thee
 Another night, to purchase the creation.

Bel. When shall we meet again?

Jaff. Anon, at twelve
 I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms:
 Come like a travell'd dove, and bring thee peace.

Bel. Indeed!

Jaff. By all our loves.

Bel. 'Tis hard to part:
 But sure no falsehood ever look'd so fairly.
 Farewell; remember twelve.

[*Exit.*

Jaff. Let Heav'n forget me,
 When I remember not thy truth, thy love.
 'How curs'd is my condition, toss'd and jostled
 'From every corner! Fortune's common fool,
 'The jest of rogues, an instrumental ass,
 'For villains to lay loads of shame upon,
 'And drive about just for their ease and scorn.'

Enter Pierre.

Pier. Jaffier.

Jaff. Who calls?

Pier. A friend, that could have wish'd
 T'have found thee otherwise employ'd. What, hunt
 A wife on the dull soil! Sure a staunch husband
 Of all bounds is the dullest. Wilt thou never,
 Never be wean'd from caudles and confections?
 What feminine tales hast thou been list'ning to,
 Of unair'd shirts, catarrhs, and tooth-ach, got
 By thin-sol'd shoes? Damnation! that a fellow,
 Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
 Of a whole people, should sneak thus into corners
 To waste his time, and fool his mind with love.

Jaff.

Jaff. May not a man then trifle out an hour
With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?

Pier. Not in a cause like ours.

Jaff. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damn'd condition: for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm, call'd lechery, has touch'd it;
'Tis tainted vilely. Would'st thou think it? *Renault*
(That mortify'd old wither'd winter rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest;
I found him out for watering at my wife;
He visited her last night, like a kind guardian:
Faith, she has some temptation, that's the truth on't.

Pier. He durst not wrong his trust.

Jaff. 'Twas something late though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.

Pier. Was she in bed?

Jaff. Yes, faith! in virgin sheets,
White as her bosom, *Pierre*, dish'd neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Oh! how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him.

Pier. Patience guide me!
He's us'd no violence?

Jaff. No, no; out on't, violence!
Play'd with her neck; brush'd her with his grey beard;
Struggl'd and touz'd; tickl'd her till she squeak'd a little,
May be, or so—but not a jot of violence—

Pier. Damn him.

Jaff. Ay, so say I: but hush, no more on't;
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster yet: 'tho' no man knows
'What fate he's born to.' Sure it is near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders:
Will the ambassador be here in person?

Pier. No, he has sent commission to that villain *Re-*
To give the executing charge: *[naul;*
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper; for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.

Jaff. Fear not, I am as cool as patience.
'Had he compleated my dishonour, rather
'Than hazard the success our hopes are ripe for,
'I'd bear it all with mortifying virtue.'

Pier. He's yonder, coming this way thro' the hall;

His thoughts seem full.

Jaff. Prithee retire and leave me
With him alone : I'll put him to some trial ;
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

Pier. Be careful then.

[*Exit.*

Jaff. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What, be a devil, take a damning oath
For shedding native blood ! Can there be a sin
In merciful repentance ? Oh, this villain !

Enter Renault.

Ren. Perverse and peevish : What a slave is man
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him !
Dispatch the fool her husband—that were well.
Who's there ?

Jaff. A man.

Ren. My friend, my near ally,
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge, is very

Jaff. Sir, are you sure of that ? [well.
Stands she in perfect health ? Beats her pulse even ;
Neither too hot nor cold ?

Ren. What means that question ?

Jaff. Oh ! women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant in their wishes, always wavering,
And never fixt. Was it not boldly done
Even at first sight, to trust the thing I lov'd
(A tempting treasure too) with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine ? but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dare accuse me ?

Jaff. Curs'd be he that doubts
Thy virtue ! I have try'd it, and declare,
Were I to chuse a guardian of my honour,
I'd put it in thy keeping ; for I know thee.

Ren. Know me !

Jaff. Ay, know thee. There's no falshood in thee ;
Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.
Now would'st thou cut my throat, or I cut thine.

Ren. You dare not do't.

Jaff. You lie, sir.

Ren. How !

Jaff. No more,

'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

*Enter Spinosa, Theodore, Illiot, Revillido, Durand,
Bramveil, and the rest of the conspirators.*

Ren. *Spinosa, Theodore,* you are welcome.

Spin. You are trembling, sir.

Ren.

Ren. 'Tis a cold night, indeed; I am aged;
Full of decay and natural infirmities. [*Pier. re enters.*
We shall be warm, my friends, I hope, to-morrow.

Pier. 'Twas not well done; thou should'st have stroak'd
And not have gall'd him, [him,

Jaff. Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heav'n! Where am I? beset with cursed fiends,
'That wait to damn me! What a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature — hush, my heart.

Ren. My friends, 'tis late: are we assembled all?
'Where's *Theodore*?

'*Theod.* At hand.

'*Ren.* *Spinosa*.

'*Spin.* Here.

'*Ren.* *Bramweil*.

'*Bram.* I am ready.

'*Ren.* *Durand* and *Brabe*.

'*Dar.* Command us.

'We are both prepar'd.'

Omnes. All; all.

Ren. '*Mezzana*, *Rewillido*.

'*Ternon*, *Retrofi*?' Oh! you're brave men, I find
Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons.

'To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Deck'd in your honours. Are the soldiers ready?

Pier. All; all.

Ren. You, *Durand*, with your thousand, must possess
St. Mark's; you, captain, know your charge already;
'Tis to secure the ducal palace: 'You,

'*Brabe*, with an hundred more, must gain the *Secque*:

'With the like number, *Bramweil*, to the *Procurale*.'

Be all this done with the least tumult possible,

'Fill in each place you post sufficient guards:

Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet,

Jaff. Oh, reverend cruelty! damn'd bloody villain.

Ren. During this execution, *Durand*, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast;

And, *Theodore*, be sure to plant the cannon

'That may command the street; 'whilst *Re-willido*,

'*Mezzana*, *Ternon*, and *Retrofi* guard you.'

This done, we'll give the general alarm,

Apply petards, and force the arse'nal gates;

Then fire the city round in several places,

Or with our cannon (if it dare resist)

Batter to ruin. But above all, I charge you
 Shed blood enough ; spare neither sex nor age,
 Name nor condition : if there lives a senator
 After-to morrow, though the dullest rogue
 That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends.
 If possible, let's kill the very name
 Of senator, and bury it in blood.

Jaff. Merciless, horrid slave—Ay, blood enough !
 Shed blood enough, old *Renault* ! how thou charm'st me !

Ren. But one thing more and then farewell, till fate
 Join us again, or sep'rate us for ever :
 First let's embrace. Heav'n knows who next shall thus
 Wing ye together : but let us all remember,
 We wear no common cause upon our sword.
 Let each man think, that on his single virtue
 Depends the good and fame of all the rest ;
 Eternal honour, or perpetual infamy.

' Let us remember, through what dreadful hazards
 ' Propitious fortune hitherto has led us :
 ' How often on the brink of some discovery
 ' Have we stood tottering, yet still kept our ground
 ' So well, that the busiest searcher ne'er could follow
 ' Those subtle tracks, which puzzled all suspicion ?'
 You droop, sir.

Jaff. No ; with most profound attention
 I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

Ren. ' Tho' there be yet few hours 'twixt them and
 ' Are not the senate lull'd in full security, [ruin,
 ' Quiet and satisfy'd, as fools are always ?
 ' Never did so profound repose fore-run
 ' Calamity so great. Nay, our good fortune
 ' Has blinded the most piercing of mankind,
 ' Strengthen'd the fearfullest, charm'd the most suspect-
 ' Confounded the most subtle ; for we live, [ful,
 ' We live, my friends, and quickly shall our lives
 ' Prove fatal to these tyrants.' Let's consider,
 ' That we destroy oppression, avarice,
 ' A people nurs'd up equally with vices
 ' And loathsome lusts, which nature most abhors,
 ' And such as without shame she cannot suffer.

Jaff. O *Belvidera* ! take me to thy arms,
 And shew me where's my peace, for I have lost it. [*Exit.*

Ren. Without the least remorse then, let's resolve
 ' With fire and sword t'exterminate these tyrants ;

' And

' And when we shall behold these curs'd tribunals
 ' Stain'd by the tears and sufferings of the innocent,
 ' Burning with flames rather from Heav'n than ours,
 ' The raging, furious, and un pitying soldier
 ' Pulling his reeking dagger from the bosoms
 ' Of gasping wretches ; death in every quarter ;
 ' With all that sad disorder can produce
 ' To make a spectacle of horror ; then,
 ' Then let us call to mind, my dearest friends,
 ' That there is nothing pure upon the earth ;
 ' That the most valu'd things have most alloys,
 ' And that in change of all those vile enormities,
 Under whose weight this wretched country labours,
 The means are only in our hands to crown them.

Pier. And may those powers above, that are propitious
 To gallant minds record this cause, and bless it !

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
 Should there, my friends, be found among us one
 False to this glorious enterprize, what fate,
 What vengeance, were enough for such a villain ?

Ell. Death here without repentance, hell hereafter,

Ren. Let that be my lot, if as here I stand,
 Listed by fate among her darling sons,
 Tho' I had one only brother, dear by all
 The strictest ties of nature ; ' tho' one hour
 ' Had given us birth, one fortune fed our wants,
 ' One only love, and that but of each other,
 ' Still fill'd our minds : ' could I have such a friend
 Join'd in this cause, and had but ground for fear
 He meant foul play ; may this right hand drop from me,
 If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
 And stab him to the heart before you. Who,
 Who would do less ? Would't thou not, *Pierre*, the same ?

Pier. You've singled me, sir, out for this hard question,
 As if 'twere started only for my sake ?

Am I the thing you fear ? Here, here's my bosom,
 Search it with all your swords. Am I a traitor ?

Ren. No : but I fear your late commended friend
 Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
 To trifle with our safety, Where's this *Jaffier* ?

Spin. He left the room just now, in strange disorder.

Ren. Nay there is danger in him : I observ'd him ;
 During the time I took for explanation,
 He was transported from most deep attention

To a confusion which he could not smother.

‘ His looks grew full of sadness and surprize,
 ‘ All which betray’d a wavering spirit in him,
 ‘ That labour’d with reluctance and sorrow.’

What’s requisite for safety must be done

With speedy execution ; he remains

Yet in our power : I, for my own part, wear

A dagger——

Pier. Well.

Ren. And I could with it——

Pier. Where ?

Ren. Bury’d in his heart.

Pier. Away ! we’re yet all friends.

No more of this ! ’twill breed ill blood among us.

Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house,
 Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
 O’er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.

Pier. Who talks of killing ? Who’s he’ll shed the blood
 That’s dear to me ? Is’t you ? or you, sir ?

What, not one speak ! how you stand gaping all

On your grave oracle, your wooden god there !

Yet not a word ! then, sir, I’ll tell you a secret ;

Suspicion’s but at best a coward’s virtue. [*To Ren.*

Ren. A coward——— [*Handles his sword.*

Pier. Put up thy sword, old man ;

Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let’s heal this breach ;

I am too hot : we yet may all live friends.

Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

Pier. Again ! Who’s that ?

Spin. ’Twas I.

Theod. And I.

Ren. And I.

Om. And all.

‘ *Ren.* Who are on my side ?

Spin. ‘ Every honest sword.’

Let’s die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

Pier. One such word more, by Heav’n, I’ll to the senate,
 And hang ye all, like dogs, in clusters.

Why weep your coward swords half out their shells ?

Why do you not all brandish them like mine ?

You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

Ren. Go to the senate, and betray us, haste !

Secure thy wretched life ; we fear to die

Less than thou dar’st be honest.

Pier.

Pier. That's rank falshood.

Fear'st thou not death? Fie, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had *Jaffier's* wife prov'd kind, he'd still been true.
Haugh—how that stinks!

Thou die! thou kill my friend! or thou! or thou!
'With that lean wither'd face!'

Away, disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you.
I'll bring the man, whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly—
Hence! hence, I say. [*Exit Renault angrily.*]

Spin. I fear we have been to blame,
And done too much.

'*Theod.* 'Twas too far urg'd against the man you lov'd.

'*Rev.* Here take our swords, and crush them with your

Spin. Forgive us, gallant friend. [*feet.*]

Pier. Nay, now you've found
The way to melt, and cast me as you will.

'I'll fetch this friend, and give him to your mercy:

'Nay, he shall die, if you will take him from me.

'For your repose, I'll quit my heart's best jewel;

'But would not have him torn away by villains,

'A spiteful villainy.

'*Spin.* No, may you both

'For ever live, and fill the world with fame.'

Pier. 'Now ye're too kind.' Whence arose all this
disceord?

Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we 'scap'd!

How near a fall was all we'd long been building!

What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories,

If one, the bravest and the best of men,

Had fall'n a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butcher'd by those, whose cause he came to cherish!

'Oh! could you know him all, as I have known him:

'How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,

'You would not leave this place till you had seen him;

'Humbled yourselves before him, kiss'd his feet,

'And gain'd remission for the worst of follies.'

Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,

And to your loves me better recommend,

That I've preserv'd your fame, and sav'd my friend. }

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T

A C T IV.

S C E N E *the Rialto.**Enter Jaffier and Belvidera.*

Jaff. WHERE dost thou lead me? Ev'ry step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a rack'd friend. O, my charming ruin!
Where are we wandering?

Bel. To eternal honour.

You do a deed shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have sav'd sinking nations. Thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserv'd
From horrid violation. Every street
Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour:
And at thy feet this great inscription written,
Remember him that propp'd the fall of Venice.

Jaff. Rather, remember him, who, after all
The sacred bonds of oaths, and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears,
Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,
To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him.
Why wilt thou damn me?

Bel. O inconstant man!

How will you promise; how will you deceive!
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,
Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,
And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
'O! that kind dagger. *Jaffier*, how't will look
'Struck thro' my heart, drench'd in my blood to th'hilt;
'Whilst these poor dying eyes, shall with their tears
'No more torment thee; then thou wilt be free:'
Or, if thou think'st it nobler, let me live,
Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust
Of that infernal devil, 'that old fiend,
'That's damn'd himself, and would undo mankind.'
Last night, my love!

Jaff. Name it not again:
It shews a beauly image to my fancy,
Will wake me into madness. 'Oh, the villain!
'That durst approach such purity as thine

'Or

‘ On terms so vile :’ Destruction, swift destruction,
 Fall on my coward head, ‘ and make my name
 ‘ The common scorn of fools, if I forgive him :
 ‘ If I forgive him ! If not revenge
 ‘ With utmost rage, and most unstaying fury,
 ‘ Thy sufferings, thou dear darling of my life.’

Bel. Delay no longer then, but to the senate,
 And tell the dismal’st story ever utter’d :
 Tell ’em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
 Have been prepar’d : how near’s the fatal hour.
 Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
 Of all its nobles, which to morrow’s dawn
 Must else see dead. ‘ Save the poor tender lives
 ‘ Of all those little infants, which the swords
 ‘ Of murderers are whetting for, this moment.
 ‘ Think thou already hear’st their dying screams ;
 ‘ Think that thou see’st their sad distracted mothers,
 ‘ Kneeling before thy feet, and begging pity :
 ‘ With torn dishevel’d hair and streaming eyes,
 ‘ Their naked mangled breasts besmear’d with blood ;
 ‘ And even the milk, with which their fondled babes
 ‘ Softly they hush’d, dropping in anguish from ’em :
 ‘ Think thou seest this, and then consult thy heart.

‘ *Jaff.* Oh !

‘ *Bel.* Think too, if you lose this present minute,
 ‘ What miseries the next day brings upon thee :
 ‘ Imagine all the horror of that night ;
 ‘ Murder and rapine, waste and desolation,
 ‘ Confus’dly raging :’ Think what then may prove
 My lot ; the ravisher may then come safe,
 And, ’midst the terror of the public ruin,
 Do a damn’d deed ; ‘ perhaps may lay a train
 ‘ To catch thy life : then where will be revenge,
 ‘ The dear revenge that’s due to such a wrong ?’

Jaff. By all Heav’n’s powers, prophetic truth dwells
 in thee ;
 For every word thou speak’st strikes thro’ my heart,
 ‘ Like a new light, and shews it, how’t has wander’d.’
 Just what thou’st made me, take me, *Belvidera*,
 And lead me to the place where I’m to say
 This bitter lesson ; where I must betray
 My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
 Must I betray my friend ? Ah ! take me quickly ;
 Secure me well before that thought’s renew’d ;

If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Bel. Hast thou a friend more dear than *Belvidera*?

Jaff. No; thou'rt my soul itself; wealth, friendship,
honour;

All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee. 'Methinks when in thy arms,
' Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute's more
' Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
' Why was such happiness not given me pure?
' Why dash'd with cruel wrongs, and bitter warnings?'
Come, lead me forward, now, like a tame lamb
To sacrifice. Thus, in his fatal garlands
Deck'd fine and pleas'd, the wanton skips and plays,
Trots by th' enticing flatt'ring priestess' side,
And much transported with its little pride,
Forgets his dear companions of the plain;
'Till, by her bound, he's on the altar lain,
Yet then too hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain. }

Enter Officer and six Guards.

Off. Stand! who goes there?

Bel. Friends.

' *Jaff.* Friends, *Belvidera*! Hide me from my friends:
' By Heav'n, I'd rather see the face of hell,
' Than meet the man I love.'

Off. But what friends are you?

Bel. Friends to the senate, and the state of *Venice*.

Off. My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the council,
Who are now sitting.

Jaff. Sir, you shall be obey'd.

' Hold, brute, stand off! none of your paw upon me.'
Now the lot's cast, and, fate, do what thou wilt.

[*Exeunt guarded.*]

S C E N E, *the Senate-house.*

*Where appear sitting the Duke of Venice, Priuli,
Antonio, and eight other Senators.*

Duke. *Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,*
Speak, why are we assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
'The state of *Venice*' honour, or its safety?

Pri. Could words express the story I've to tell you,
Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
We all should weep, tear off these purple robes,

And

And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heav'n :
Heav'n knows, if yet there be an hour to come
Ere *Venice* be no more.

All Sen. How !

Pri. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends, our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes : nay, the hour too fix'd ; [ment,
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this mo-
And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning ; but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
That may inform the world, in after-ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd, tho' we were. [*A noise without.*
Room, room, make room for some prisoners —

' *Sen.* Let's raise the city.'

Enter Officer and Guard.

Duke. Speak there. What disturbance ?

Offi. Two prisoners have the guards seiz'd in the street,
Who say, they come to inform this reverend senate
About the present danger.

Enter Jaffier and Officer.

All. Give 'em entrance—Well, who are you ?

Jaff. A villian.

Ant. ' Short and pithy :'

The man speaks well.

Jaff. Would every man, that hears me,
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.

Duke. 'Tis rumour'd, that a plot has been contriv'd
Against the state ; and you've a share in't too.
If you are a villian, to redeem your honour
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

Jaff. Think not, that I to save my life came hither ;
I know its value better ; but in pity
To all those wretches, whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of *Venice* :
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.

Duke. The slaves capitulates ;
Give him the tortures.

Jaff.

Jaff. That you dare not do :
 Your fear won't let you, nor the longing itch
 To hear a story which you dread the truth of :
 Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me,
 Cowards are fear'd with threat'ning ; boys are whipt
 Into confessions : but a steady mind
 Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
 Give him the tortures !—name but such a thing
 Again, by Heav'n I'll shut these lips for ever.
 Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
 Shall force a groan away, that you may guess at.

' *Ant.* A bloody-minded fellow, I'll warrant ;
 ' A damn'd bloody-minded fellow.'

Duke. Name your conditions.

Jaff. For myself full pardon,
 Besides the lives of two and twenty friends,
 Whose names are here enroll'd—Nay, let their crimes
 Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
 And sacred promise of this reverend council,
 That in a full assembly of the senate
 The thing I swear be ratify'd. Swear this,
 And I'll unfold the secret of your danger.

' *All.* We'll swear.'

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaff. By all the hopes
 You have of peace and happiness hereafter,
 Swear.

' *All.* We all swear.

' *Jaff.* To grant me what I've ask'd,
 ' Ye swear ?'

All. We swear.

Jaff. And, as ye keep the oath,
 May you, and your posterity be blest'd,
 Or curs'd for ever,

All. Else be curs'd for ever.

Jaff. Then here's the list, and with't the full disclose
 Of all that threatens you. [*Delivers a paper.*]
 Now, fate, thou hast caught me.

' *Ant.* Why, what a dreadful catalogue of cut-throats
 ' is here ! I'll warrant you, not one of these fellows but
 ' has a face like a lion. I dare not so much as read
 ' their names over.'

Duke. Give order that all diligent search be made
 To seize these men, their characters are public.

The

The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of the fam'd *Grecian* courtezan,
Call'd *Aquilina*; see the place secur'd.

' *Ant.* What, my Nicky Nacky! hurry durry!
' Nicky Nacky, in the plot—I'll make a speech,
' Most noble senators,
' What headlong apprehensions drive you on,
' Right noble, wise, and truly solid senators,
' To violate the laws and rights of nations?
' The lady is a lady of renown;
' 'Tis true, she holds a house of fair reception,
' And, tho' I say't myself, as many more
' Can say, as well as I——

' 2 *Sen.* My lord, long speeches
' Are frivolous here, when dangers are so near us.
' We all well know your interest in that lady;
' The world talks loud on't.

' *Ant.* Verily I have done;
' I say no more.

' *Duke.* But, since he has declar'd
' Himself concern'd, pray, captain, take great caution
' To treat the fair one as becomes her character;
' And let her bed-chamber be search'd with decency.'
You, *Jaffier*, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.

Jaff. Would the chains of death
Had bound me safe, ere I had known this minute.
' I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
' Quoted in competition with all ill ones:
' The story of my wickedness shall run
' Down thro' the low traditions of the vulgar,
' And boys be taught to tell the tale of *Jaffier*.'

Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

Jaff. Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;
Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falshood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee?

[*Exit guarded.*]

Offi. [*without.*] More traitors; room, room, make

Duke. How's this, guards? [room there.]

Where are our guards? Shut up the gates, the treason's
Already at the doors.

Enter Officer.

Offi. My lords, more traitors,

Seiz'd

Seiz'd in the very act of consultation ;
 Furnish'd with arms and instruments of mischief.
 Bring in the prisoners.

*Enter Pierre, Renault, Theodore, Elliot, Revellido,
 and other conspirators, in fetters.*

Pier. You, my lords, and fathers,
 (As you are pleas'd to call yourselves) of *Venice* ;
 If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
 Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
 That have so often labour'd in your service ?
 Are these the wreaths of triumph ye bestow
 On those, that bring you conquest home, and honours ?

Duke. Go on ; you shall be heard, sir.

'Ant. And be hang'd too, I hope.'

Pier. Are these the trophies I've deserv'd, for fighting
 Your battles with confederated powers ?
 When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you,
 And brought the fleets of *Spain* to your own harbours ;
 And you, great Duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
 And saw your wife, the *Auriatic*, plough'd,
 Like a lewd whore, by bolder plows than yours ;
 Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your loose *Venetians*
 The task of honour, and the way of greatness ?
 Rais'd you from your capitulating fears
 To stipulate the terms of su'd-for peace ?
 And this my recompence ! If I'm a traitor,
 Produce my charge ; or shew the wretch that's base
 And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.

Duke. Know you one *Jaffier* ? [*Consp. murmur.*]

Pier. Yes, and know his virtue.

His justice, truth, his general worth, and sufferings
 From a hard father, taught me first to love him.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Enter Jaffier guarded.

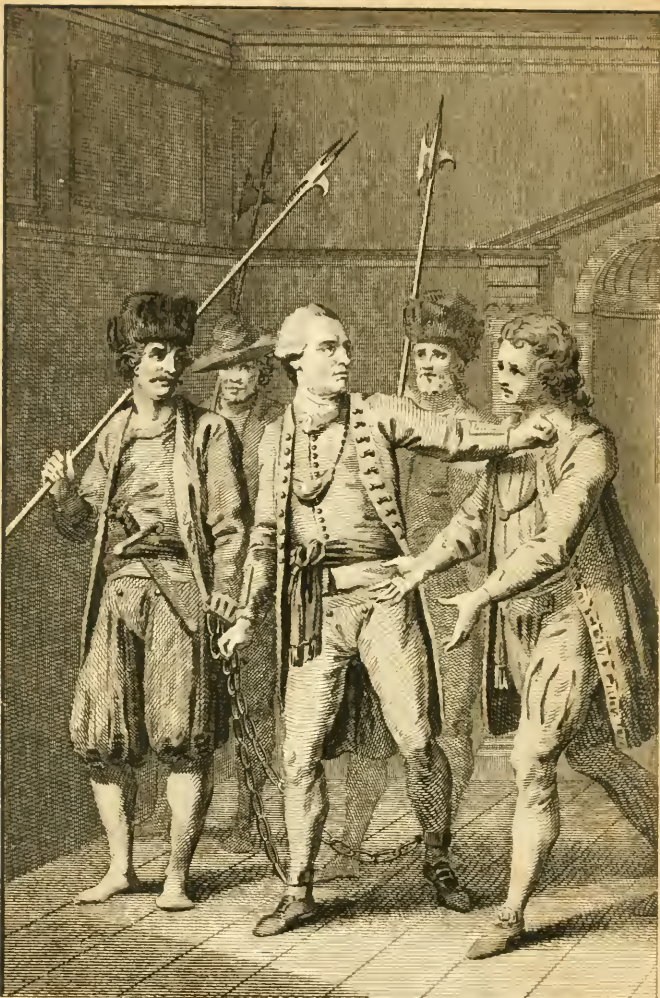
Pier. My friend too bound ! nay then
 Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.
 Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine,
 They're but one thing ? These reverend tyrants, *Jaffier*,
 Call us traitors. Art thou one, my brother ?

Jaff. To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave,
 That e'er betray'd a generous, trusting friend,
 And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.
 All our fair hopes, which morning was t' have crown'd,
 Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.

Pier.



VENICE PRESERVED.



Edwards ad viv del.

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Collyer sculp.

M. BENSLEY in the Character of PIERRE
Who's he disputes the Judgment of the Senate?
Presumptuous Rebel! —————

Act 4. Sc. 2.

Pier. So, then all's over :

Venice hast lost her freedom, I my life.
No more !

Duke. Say ; will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy ?

Pier. Curs'd be your senate : curs'd your constitution :
The curse of growing factions and divisions,
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me.

Duke. Pardon, or death ?

Pier. Death ! honourable death !

Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give.
No shameful bonds, but honourable death.

Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard your
prisoners.

Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judgment.

Ex. all the senators.

Pier. Come, where's my dungeon ? Lead me to my
It will not be the first time I've lodg'd hard [draw :
To do the senate service.

Jaff. Hold one moment.

Pier. Who's he disputes the judgment of the senate ?
Presumptuous rebel—on— [Strikes *Jaff.*

Jaff. By Heaven, you stir not !
I must be heard ; I must have leave to speak.
Thou hast disgraced me, *Pierre*, by a vile blow :
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice ?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries :
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
With pity and with charity behold me ;
' Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance :'
But, as there dwells a godlike nature in thee,
Listen with mildness to my supplications.

Pier. What whining monk art thou ? what holy cheat,
That would st inroach upon my credulous ears,
And cant'st thus vilely ? Hence ! I know thee not ;
' Dissemble and be nasty.' Leave, hypocrite.

Jaff. Not know me, *Pierre* !

Pier. No, know thee not ! What art thou ?

Jaff. *Jaffier*, thy friend, thy once-lov'd valu'd friend !
Tho' now deservedly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

Pier. Thou, *Jaffier* ! thou, my once-lov'd valu'd friend !

By Heav'ns, thou ly'st; the man so call'd, my friend,
 Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant;
 Noble in mind, and in his person lovely;
 Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart:
 But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
 Poor, even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect;
 All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
 Prithee avoid; nor longer cling thus round me,
 Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

Jaff. I have not wrong'd thee, by these tears I have not.
 ' But still am honest, true, and, hope too, valiant;
 ' My mind still full of thee, therefore still noble.
 ' Let not thy eyes then shun me, nor thy heart
 ' Detest me utterly. Oh! look upon me,
 ' Look back, and see my sad, sincere submission!
 ' How my heart swells, as e'en 'twould burst my bosom;
 ' Fond of its goal, and labouring to be at thee.
 ' What shall I do? what say, to make thee hear me?'

Pier. Hast thou not wrong'd me? Darest thou call
 'That once-lov'd, valu'd friend of mine, [thyself
 And swear thou hast not wrong'd me? Whence these
 chains?

Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
 Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one?

Jaff. All's true; yet grant one thing, and I've done

Pier. What's that? [asking.

Jaff. To take thy life, on such conditions
 The council have propos'd: thou, and thy friends,
 May yet live long, and to be better treated.

Pier. Life! ask my life! confess! record myself
 A villain, for the privilege to breathe,
 And carry up and down this cursed city,
 A discontented and repining spirit,
 Burthensome to itself, a few years longer;
 'To lose it, may be, at last, in a lewd quarrel
 For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art!
 No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
 And cannot part on better terms than now,
 When only men, like thee, are fit to live in't.

Jaff. By all that's just——

Pier. Swear by some other power,
 For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

Jaff. Then, by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee,
 Till, to thyself at least, thou'rt reconcil'd,

However

However thy resentment deal with me.

Pier. Not leave me!

Jaff. No; thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head; I'll bear it all with patience
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty:
Lie at thy feet, and kiss 'em, tho' they spurn me;
Till wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms, with dear forgiveness.

Pier. Art thou not —

Jaff. What?

Pier. A traitor?

Jaff. Yes.

Pier. A villain?

Jaff. Granted.

Pier. A coward, a most scandalous coward;
Spiritless, void of honour; one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life!

Jaff. All, all, and more, much more: my faults are
numberless.

Pier. And would'st thou have me live on terms like
Base, as thou'rt false — [thine?

Jaff. No; 'tis to me that's granted:
The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
In recompence for faith and trust so broken.

Pier. I scorn it more, because preserv'd by thee;
And, as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, fought thee in thy miseries,
Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from the state
Of wretchedness, in which thy fate had plung'd thee,
To rank thee in my list of noble friends;
All I receiv'd, in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,
Given with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n:
So I restore it back to thee again;
Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this curs'd hour, to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest, with thee, tho' our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewel—for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaff. Say, thou wilt live then.

Pier. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

Jaff. O *Pierre*!

Pier. No more.

Jaff. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ake with gazing.

Pier. Leave me—Nay, then thus, thus I throw thee
from me;

And curses, great as is thy falshood, catch thee. [Ex.

Jaff. Amen.

He's gone, my father, friend, preserver;

And here's the portion he has left me:

[Holds the dagger up.

This dagger. Well remember'd! with this dagger,

I gave a solemn vow of dire importance;

Parted with this, and *Belvidera* together.

Have a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no farther:

No, I'll esteem it, as a friend's last legacy;

Treasure it up, within this wretched bosom,

Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,

That, when they meet, they start not from each other.

So, now for thinking—A blow, call'd traitor, villain,

Coward, dishonourable coward; fough!

'Oh! for a long sound sleep, and so forget it.'

Down, busy devil.

Enter Belvidera.

Bel. Whither shall I fly?

Where hide me and my miseries together?

Where's now the *Roman* constancy I boasted?

Sunk into trembling fears and desperation,

Not daring to look up to that dear face

Which us'd to smile, even on my faults; but, down,

Bending these miserable eyes to earth,

Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

Jaff. Mercy! kind Heav'n has surely endless stores

Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted:

'Let wretches, loaded hard with guilt, as I am,

'Bow with the weight, and groan beneath the burthen,

'Creep with a remnant of that strength they've left

'Before the footstool of that Heav'n they've injur'd.'

O, *Belvidera*! I am the wretched'st creature [me;

Ever crawl'd on earth. 'Now, if thou'st virtue, help

'Take me into thy arms, and speak the words of peace

'To my divided soul, that wars within me,

'And raises every sense to my confusion:

'By Heav'n, I'm tottering on the very brink

'Of

' Of peace; and thou art all the hold I've left.

' *Bel.* Alas! I know thy sorrows are most mighty:

' I know thou'lt cause to mourn, to mourn, my *Jaffier*,

' With endless cries, and never-ceasing wailing:

' Thou'lt lost——

' *Jaff.* Oh! I have lost what can't be counted;

My friend too, *Belvidera*, that dear friend,

Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoic'd in,

Has us'd me like a slave, shamefully us'd me:

'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.

' What shall I do? Resentment, indignation,

' Love, pity, fear, and mem'ry how I've wrong'd him,

' Distract my quiet, with the very thought on't,

' And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.'

Bel. What has he done?

' *Jaff.* Thou'dst hate me, should I tell thee.

' *Bel.* Why?

[bear it;

' *Jaff.* Oh! he has us'd me! yet, by Heav'n, I

' He has us'd me, *Belvidera*! but first swear, [terly,

' That when I've told thee, thou wilt not loath me ut-

' Tho' vilest blots and stains appear upon me;

' But still, at least with charitable goodness,

' Be near me, in the pangs of my affliction;

' Nor scorn me, *Belvidera*, as he has done.

' *Bel.* Have I then e'er been false, that now I'm
' doubted?

' Speak, what's the cause I'm grown into distrust?

' Why thought unfit to hear my love's complaining?

' *Jaff.* Oh!

' *Bel.* Tell me.

' *Jaff.* Bear my failings, for they're many.

' O my dear angel! in that friend, I've lost

' All my soul's peace; for every thought of him,

' Strikes my sense hard, and deads it in my brains!

' Would'it thou believe it?

' *Bel.* Speak.'

Jaff. Before we parted,

Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,

Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,

With eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding heart,

' Humbling myself, almost beneath my nature.'

As at his feet I kneel'd, and sued for mercy,

' Forgetting all our friendship, all the dearness,

' In which we've liv'd so many years together,'

With a reproachful hand, he dash'd a blow:
 He struck me, *Belvidera!* by Heav'n, he struck me!
 Buffeted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward.
 Am I a coward? Am I villain? Tell me:
 Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so?
 Damnation! coward!

Bel. Oh! forgive him, *Jaffier*;
 And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
 What will they do to-morrow?

Jaff. Ah!

Bel. To-morrow,
 When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the agonies
 Of a tormenting and a shameful death;
 His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
 Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain;
 What will thy heart do then? Oh! sure 'twill stream,
 Like my eyes now.

Jaff. What means thy dreadful story?
 Death, and to-morrow? broken limbs and bowels!
 'Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain!
 'By all my fears, I shall start out to madness
 'With barely guessing, if the truth's hid longer.'

Bel. The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed,
 They say, according to our friends' request,
 They shall have death, and no ignoble bondage:
 Declare their promis'd mercy all as forfeited:
 False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession,
 Warrants are pass'd for public death to-morrow.

Jaff. Death! doom'd to die! condemn'd unheard!
 unpleaded!

Bel. Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are preparing
 To force confession from their dying fangs.
 Oh! do not look so terribly upon me!
 How your lips shake, and all your face disorder'd!
 What means my love?

Jaff. Leave me, I charge thee leave me! — Strong
 Wake in my heart. [temptations]

Bel. For what?

Jaff. No more, but leave me.

Bel. Why?

Jaff. Oh! by Heav'n, I love thee with that fondness,
 I would not have thee stay a moment longer
 Near these curs'd hands; are they not cold upon thee?

[Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom,
 and puts it back again.]

Bel. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
To lean thus on thy breast, is softer ease
Than downy pillows, deck'd on leaves of roses.

Jaff. Alas! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis fill'd
with:

Fly ere they gall thee. There's a lurking serpent
Ready to leap, and sting thee to the heart:
Art thou not terrify'd?

Bel. No.

Jaff. Call to mind

What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought me.

Bel. Hah! [mischief!]

Jaff. Where's my friend? my friend, thou smiling
Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late; 'thou should'st have fled
'When thy guilt first had cause;' for dire revenge
Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans!
Hark, how he groans! his screams are in my ears
Already; see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder! perjurd senate!
Murder—Oh!—Hark thee, traitress, thou hast done this!
Thanks to thy tears, and false persuading love.
How her eyes speak! oh, thou bewitching creature!

[Feeling for his dagger.]

Madness can't hurt thee. Come, thou little trembler,
Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe;
'Tis thy own citadel—Hah—yet stand off,
Heav'n must have justice, 'and my broken vows
'Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy.'
I'll wink, and then 'tis done—

B l. What means the lord

Of me, my life, and love? What's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so? 'Nay, why am I thus treated?

[Jaffier draws the dagger, and offers to stab her.]

'What wilt thou do?' Ah! do not kill me, *Jaffier*:
'Pity these panting breasts, and trembling limbs;
'That us'd to clasp thee when thy looks were milder,
'That yet hang heavy on my unpurg'd soul;
'And plunge it not into eternal darkness.'

Jaff. Know, *Belvidera*, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee, as in trust,
To be thy portion if I e'er prov'd false.
On such condition was my truth believ'd:
But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.

[Offers to stab her again.]

Bel. Oh! merc'.

[*Kneeling.*

Jaff. Nay, no struggling.

Bel. Now, then, kill me.

[*Leaps on his neck, and kisses him.*

While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,

Kiss thy revengeful lips, and die in joys

Greater than any I can guess hereafter.

Jaff. I am, I am a coward, witness Heav'n,

Witness it, earth, and ev'ry being witness:

'Tis but one blow! yet, by immortal love,

I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee,

[*He throws away the dagger, and embraces her.*

The seal of Providence is sure upon thee;

And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders.

Oh! thou wert either born to save or damn me.

By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul,

By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,

'By the victorious love that still waits on thee;'

Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,

Or all our future quiet's lost for ever.

Fall at his feet, cling round his rev'rend limbs,

Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears,

Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him,

Crush him in th' arms, torture him with thy softness;

Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,

But conquer him, as thou hast conquer'd me. [Exit.

A C T V.

SCENE, *an apartment in Priuli's house.*

Enter Priuli solus.

WHY, cruel Heav'n, have my unhappy days
Been lengthen'd to this sad one? Oh! dishonour,
And deathless infamy have fall'n upon me.

Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.

But then, my only child, my daughter wedded:

There my best blood runs foul, and a disease

Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory,

To make it rot and sink to after-ages.

'Curs'd be the fatal minute when I got her;

'Or wou'd that I'd been any thing but man,

' And

' And rais'd an issue which would ne'er have wrong'd me.
 ' The mis-ablest creatures (man excepted)
 ' Are not the less esteem'd, tho' their posterity
 ' Degenerate from the virtues of their fathers :
 ' The vilest beasts are happy in their offspring,
 ' While only man gets traitors, whores, and villains,
 ' Curs'd be the name, and some swift blow from fate,
 ' Lay this head deep, where mine may be forgotten.'

Enter Belvidera in a long mourning veil.

Bel. He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
 That for three years has left an only child,
 Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
 And cruel ruin!—oh —

Pri. What child of sorrow
 Art thou, that com'st wrapt up in weeds of sadness,
 And mov'st as if thy steps were tow'rd a grave?

Bel. A wretch who, from the very top of happiness
 Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,
 And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.

Pri. Indeed thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted sorrows :
 ' Would I could help thee!

Bel. 'Tis greatly in your power :
 ' The world too speaks you charitable; and I,
 ' Who ne'er ask'd alms before, in that dear hope,
 ' Am come a begging to you, sir.

Pri. For what?

Bel. Oh! well regard me, is this voice a strange one?
 ' Consider too when beggars once pretend
 ' A case like mine, no little will content 'em.'

Pri. What wouldst thou beg for?

Bel. Pity and forgiveness. [*Throws up her veil.*]
 By the kind tender names of child and father,
 Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

Pri. My daughter!

Bel. Yes, your daughter, ' by a mother
 ' Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour,
 ' Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,
 ' Dear to your arms. By all the joys she gave you,
 ' When in her blooming years she was your treasure,
 ' Look kindly on me! In my face behold
 ' The lineaments of her's you've kiss'd so often,
 ' Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.

Pri. Thou art my daughter.

Bel. Yes!—and you've oft told me,

With smiles of love and chaste paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.

Pri. Oh!

'Hadt thou inherited her matchless virtues,
'I'd too been bless'd.

Bel. Nay, do not call to memory
'My disobedience; but let pity enter
'Into your heart, and quite efface th' impression.
'For could you think how mine's perplex'd with sadness,
'Fears and despairs distract the peace within me;
'Oh! you would take me into your dear, dear arms,
'Hover with strong compassion o'er your young one,
'To shelter me with a protecting wing
'From the black gather'd storm, that's just, just break-

Pri. Don't talk thus. [ing.]

Bel. Yes, I must: and you must hear too.

I have a husband.

Pri. Damn him.

Bel. Oh! do not curse him.

He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any terms, how'er he deal with me.

Pri. Ah! what means my child?

Bel. Oh! there's but this short moment
'Twixt me and fate: yet send me not with curses
'Down to my grave; afford me one kind blessing
'Before we part: just take me into your arms,
'And recommend me with a prayer to Heav'n,
'That I may die in peace; and when I'm dead——

Pri. How my soul's catch'd!

Bel. Lay me, I beg you lay me
'By the dear ashes of my tender mother.
'She would have pity'd me, had fate yet spar'd her.

Pri. By Heav'n, my aking heart forebodes much mis-
chief!

'Tell me thy story, for I'm still thy father.

Bel. No: I'm still contented.

Pri. Speak.

Bel. No matter.

Pri. Tell me:

'By yon bless'd Heav'n, my heart runs o'er with fond-

Bel. Oh! [ness.]

Pri. Utter it.

Bel. Oh! my dear husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,

To pierce the heart of your poor *Belvidera*.

Pri. Kill thee !

Bel. Yes, kill me. When he pass'd his faith
And covenant against your state and senate,
He gave me up a hostage for his truth :
With me a dagger, and a dire commission,
Whene'er he fail'd, to plunge it thro' this bosom.
I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
T' attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail'd, and bless'd me with success !
He came, confess'd, betray'd his dearest friends
For promis'd mercy. Now they're doom'd to suffer,
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows t'appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood th' atonement.

Pri. Heav'ns !

Bel. Think you saw what pass'd at our last parting ;
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,
Pacing the earth, and tearing up his steps,
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning fury : think you saw his one hand
Fix'd on my throat, while the extended other
Grasp'd a keen threat'ning dagger : Oh ! 'twas thus
We last embrac'd, when, trembling with revenge,
He dragg'd me to the ground, and at my bosom
Presented horrid death. Cry'd out, my friends,
Where are my friends ? swore, wept, rag'd, threaten'd,
lov'd,
For he yet lov'd, and that dear love preserv'd me
To this last trial of a father's pity.
I fear not death ; but cannot bear a thought
That dear hand should do th' unfriendly office,
If I was ever then your care, now hear me ;
Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made a sacrifice.

Pri. Oh, my heart's comfort !

Bel. Will you not, my father ?

Weep not, but answer me.

Pri. By Heav'n, I will.

Not one of them but what shall be immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past ?
I'll henceforth be indeed a father ; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life.

Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee:
Peace to thy heart. Farewell.

Bel. Go, and remember,

'Tis *Belvidera's* life her father pleads for. [*Ex. severally.*]

' *Enter Antonio.*

' Hum, hum, ha !

' Signor *Priuli*, my lord *Priuli*, my lord, my lord, my
' lord. Now we lords love to call one another by our
' titles. My lord, my lord, my lord,—Pox on him, I
' am a lord as well as he. And so let him fiddle.—I'll
' warrant him he's gone to the senate-house, and I'll
' be there too, soon enough for somebody. Odd—
' here's a tickling speech about the plot ; I'll prove
' there's a plot with a vengeance—would I had it with-
' out book ; let me see——

' ' Most reverend senators,

' ' That there is a plot, surely by this time no man that
' hath eyes or understanding in his head will presume to
' doubt ; 'tis as plain as the light in the cucumber—no
' —hold there—cucumber does not come in yet—'tis
' as plain as the light in the sun, or as the man in the
' moon, even at noon day. It is indeed a pumpkin-
' plot, which just as it was mellow, we have gather'd,
' and now we have gather'd it, prepar'd and dress'd it,
' shall we throw it like a pickled cucumber out of the
' window ? No : that it is not only a bloody, horrid, ex-
' ecrable, damnable, and audacious plot ; but it is as I
' may so say, a saucy plot : and we all know, most reve-
' rend fathers, that what is sauce for a goose is sauce for a
' gander : therefore, I say, as those blood-thirsty-ganders
' of the conspiracy would have destroy'd us geese of the
' senate, let us make haste to destroy them ; so I humbly
' move for hanging—Hah ! hurry durry,—I think this
' will do ; though I was something out at first, about the
' sun and the cucumber.

' *Enter Aquilina.*

' *Aqui.* Good-morrow, senator.

Ant. Nacky, my dear Nacky ; morrow, Nacky ; odd
' I am very brisk, very merry, very pert, very jovial—
' ha a a a a—kiss me, Nacky ! how dost thou do, my lit-
' tle tory rory trumpet ? Kiss me, I say, hussy, kiss me.

' *Aqui.* Kiss me, Nacky ! hang you, fir coxcomb ;
' hang you, fir.

' *Ant.* Hussy, taity, is it so indeed ? With all my
' heart,

' heart, faith—*Hey, then up go we.* Faith, *hey—'ben up go we,* dum dum derum dump. [sings.

' *Aqui.* Signor.

' *Ant.* Madona.

' *Aqui.* Do you intend to die in your bed?

' *Ant.* About threescore years hence much may be done, my dear.

' *Aqui.* You'll be hang'd, Signor.

' *Ant.* Hang'd, sweet-heart! prithee be quiet; hang'd quoth-a; that's a merry conceit with all my heart; why thou jok'it, Nacky; thou art given to joking, I'll swear. Well, I protest, Nacky, nay I must protest, and will protest, that I love joking dearly, man. And I love thee for joking, and I'll kiss thee for joking, and towse thee for joking; and odd, I have a devilish mind to take thee aside about that business for joking too, odd I have; and *Hey, then up we go,* dum dum derum dump. [sings.

' *Aqui.* See you this, sir? [Draws a dagger.

' *Ant.* O laud, a dagger! Oh, laud! it is naturally my aversion, I cannot endure the sight on't; hide it, for Heaven's sake; I cannot look that way till it be gone—hide it, hide it, oh! oh! hide it.

' *Aqui.* Yes, in your heart I'll hide it.

' *Ant.* My heart! what hide a dagger in my heart's blood!

' *Aqui.* Yes, in thy heart, thy throat, thou pamper'd devil;

' Thou hast help'd to spoil my peace, and I'll have vengeance

' On thy curs'd life, for all the bloody senate,

' The perjur'd faithless senate. Where's my lord,

' My happiness, my love, my god, my hero?

' Doom'd by thy accursed tongue, among the rest,

' T' a shameful rack. By all the rage that's in me,

' I'll be whole years in murdering thee.

' *Ant.* Why, Nacky,

' Wherefore so passionate? What have I done? What's

' the matter, my dear Nacky? Am not I thy love, thy

' happiness, thy lord, thy hero, thy senator, and every

' thing in the world, Nacky?

' *Aqui.* Thou! think'it thou, thou art fit to meet my To bear the eager clasp of my embraces? [joys:

' Give me *Pierre*, or—

' *Ant.*

' *Ant.* Why, he's to be hang'd, little Nacky ;

' Truss'd up for treason, and so forth, child.

' *Aqui.* 'Thou ly'st ; stop down thy throat that hellish
' sentence,

' Or 'tis thy last : swear that my love shall live ;

' Or thou'rt dead

' *Ant.* Ah ! h h h.

' *Aqui.* Swear to recall his doom ;

' Swear at my feet, and tremble at my fury.

' *Ant.* I do ! Now if she would but kick a little bit ;

' one kick now, Ah ! h h h.

' *Aqui.* Swear, or—

' *Ant.* I do, by these dear fragrant foots, and little
' toes, sweet as e e e e, my Nacky, Nacky, Nacky,
' faith and troth.

' *Aqui.* How !

' *Ant.* Nothing but untie thy shoe-strings a little, that's
' all, that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's all, all.

' *Aqui.* Nay, then—

' *Ant.* Hold ; hold ; thy love, thy lord, thy hero,
' shall be preserv'd and safe.

' *Aqui.* Or may this poniard

' Rust in thy heart.

' *Ant.* With all my soul.

' *Aqui.* Farewel.

[*Exit.*

' *Ant.* Adieu. Why, what a bloody-minded inve-
' terate, termagant strumpet have I been plagued with !
' Oh ! h h ! yet no more ! nay then I die, I die—I'm
' dead already.

[*Stretches himself out.*]

S C E N E, *changes to a Garden.* Enter Jaffier.

Jaff. Final destruction seize on all the world.

Bend down, ye Heav'ns, and shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion ;

' Scorch it with elemental flames, to one curs'd cinder,

' And all us little creepers in't, call'd men,

' Burn, burn to nothing : but let *Venice* burn

' Hotter than all the rest : here kindle hell,

' Ne'er to extinguish ; and let souls hereafter

' Groan here, in all those pains which mine feels now.'

Enter Belvidera.

Bel. My life——

[*Meeting him.*

Jaff. My plague——

[*Turning from her.*

Bel. Nay, then I see my ruin.

If I must die !

' *Jaff.* No, death's this day too busy ;

' Thy

'Thy father's ill-timed mercy came too late.
 'I thank thee for thy labours though; and him too:
 'But all my poor, betray'd, unhappy friends,
 'Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour;
 'And yet I live.

Bel. Then be the next my doom:

'I see, thou hast pass'd my sentence in thy heart,
 'And I'll no longer weep, or plead against it,
 'But with the humblest, most obedient patience,
 'Meet thy dear hands, and kiss 'em when they wound
 'Indeed I am willing; but I beg thee do it [me.
 'With some remorse; and when thou giv'st the blow,
 'View me with eyes of a relenting love,
 'And shew me pity, for 'twill sweeten justice.

Jaff. Shew pity to thee!

Bel. Yes; and when thy hands,
 'Charg'd with my fate, come trembling to the deed,
 'As thou hast done a thousand thousand times
 'To this poor breast, when kinder rage hath brought thee,
 'When our stung hearts have leap'd to meet each other,
 'And melting kisses seal'd our lips together:
 'When joys have left me gasping in thy arms:
 'So let my death come now, and I'll not shrink from't.'

Jaff. Nay, *Belvidera*, do not fear my cruelty,
 Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy;
 But answer me to what I shall demand,
 With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.

Bel. I will, when I've done weeping—

Jaff. Fie, no more on't——
 How long is't since that miserable day
 We wedded first?

Bel. Oh! h h!

Jaff. Nay, keep in thy tears,
 Lest they unman me too.

Bel. Heav'n knows I cannot?
 The words you utter sound so very sadly,
 The streams will follow—

Jaff. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry then.

Bel. But was't a miserable day?

Jaff. A curs'd one.

Bel. I thought it otherwise; and you've often sworn,
 'In the transporting hours of warmest love,
 'When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn,' you

Jaff. 'Twas a rash oath. [blest'd it.

Bel.

Bel. Then why am I not curs'd too ?

Jaff. No, *Belvidera* ; by th' eternal truth,
I doat with too much fondness.

Bel. Still so kind !

Still then do you love me ?

Jaff. ' Nature in her workings

' Inclines not with more ardour to creation,

' Than I do now towards thee : ' man ne'er was blest'd
Since the first pair met, as I have been.

Bel. Then sure you will not curse me ?

Jaff. No, I'll blest thee.

I came on purpose, *Belvidera*, to blest thee.

'Tis now, I think, three years, we've liv'd together.

Bel. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till reverend grown for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together ;
There sleep in peace, till an eternal morning.

' *Jaff.* When will that be ? [Sighing.]

' *Bel.* I hope, long ages hence.

' *Jaff.* Have I not hitherto (I beg thee tell me

' Thy very fears) us'd thee with tender'st love ?

' Did e'er my soul rise up in wrath against thee ?

' Did I e'er frown, when *Belvidera* smil'd ?

' Or by the least unfriendly word, betray

' Abating passion ? Have I ever wrong'd thee ?

' *Bel.* No.

' *Jaff.* Has my heart, or have my eyes, e'er wander'd

' To any other woman ?

' *Bel.* Never, never—I were the worst of false ones,

' should I accuse thee.

' I own I've been too happy ; blest'd above

' My sex's charter.

Jaff. Did I not say, I came to blest thee ?

Bel. You did.

Jaff. Then hear me, bounteous Heav'n :

Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,

Where everlasting sweets are always springing,

With a continual giving hand : let peace,

Honour, and safety, always hover round her ;

Feed her with plenty ; let her eyes ne'er see

A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning :

Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,

Harmless as her own thoughts ; and prop her virtue,

To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd ;

And comfort her with patience in our parting ! *Bel.*

Bel. How! parting, parting!

Jaff. Yes, for ever parting;

I have sworn, *Belvidera*, by yon Heav'n,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever.

Bel. Oh! call back

Your cruel blessing; stay with me, and curse me.

Jaff. No, 'tis resolv'd.

Bel. Then hear me too, just Heav'n:

' Pour down your curses on this wretched head,
' With never-ceasing vengeance; let despair,
' Danger, and infamy, nay all, surround me;
' Starve me with wantings: let my eyes ne'er see
' A sight of comfort, nor my heart know peace;
' But dash my days with sorrow, nights with horrors,
' Wild as my own thoughts now, and let loose fury
' To make me mad enough for what I lose,
' If I must lose him. If I must! I will not.
' Oh! turn and hear me!'

Jaff. Now hold, heart, or never.

Bel. By all the tender days we've liv'd together,

' By all our charming nights, and joys that crown'd em.'
Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak.

Jaff. Oh! oh!

Bel. By these arms, that now cling round thy neck,

' By this dear kiss, and by ten thousand more,'

By these poor streaming eyes——

Jaff. Murder! unhold me:

By th' immortal destiny that doom'd me

[*Draws his dagger.*

To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer;

Resolve to let me go; or see me fall——

Bel. Hold, fir, be patient.'

Jaff. Hark, the dismal bell

[*Passing bell tolls.*

Tolls out for death! I must attend its call too;

For my poor friend, my dying *Pierre*, expects me:

He sent a message to require I'd see him

Before he dy'd, and take his last forgiveness.

Farewel for ever.

Bel. Leave thy dagger with me,

Bequeath me something—Not one kiss at parting!

Oh! my poor heart, when wilt thou break?

[*Going out, looks backs at him.*

Jaff. Yet stay:

We

We have a child, as yet a tender infant :
 Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone ;
 Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour,
 But never let him know his father's story ;
 I charge thee guard him from the wrongs, my fate
 May do his future fortune or his name.

Now—nearer yet— *[Approaching each other.]*

Oh ! that my arms were riveted
 Thus round thee ever ! But my friends ! my oath !

This, and no more. *[Kisses her.]*

Bel. Another, sure another,
 For that poor little one you've ta'en such care of,
 I'll give't him truly.

Jaff. So—now farewell.

Bel. For ever ?

Jaff. Heav'n knows, for ever ; all good angels guard
 thee. *[Exit.]*

Bel. All ill ones sure had charge of me this moment.
 Curs'd be my days, and doubly curs'd my nights,
 ' Which I must now mourn out in widow'd tears ;
 ' Blasted by every herb, and fruit, and tree ;
 ' Curs'd be the rain that falls upon the earth,
 ' And may the general curse reach man and beast.'
 Oh ! give me daggers, fire, or water :
 How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the waves
 Huzzing and foaming round my sinking head,
 Till I descended to the peaceful bottom !
 Oh ! there's all quiet, here all rage and fury :
 The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain ;
 I long for thick substantial sleep : Hell ! hell !
 Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
 If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am.

Enter Priuli, and Servants.

' Who's there ? *[They seize her.]*

' *Pri.* Run, seize, and bring her safely home ;
 ' Guard her as you would life : alas, poor creature !

' *Bel.* What to my husband ! then conduct me quickly ;
 ' Are all things ready ? Shall we die most gloriously ;
 ' Say not a word of this to my old father :
 ' Murmuring streams, soft shades, and springing flow-
 ers !

' Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber.'

[Exeunt.]

SCENE

SCENE opening, discovers a Scaffold, and a Wheel prepar'd for the Execution of Pierre; then enter Officer, Pierre, and Guards, 'a Friar,' Executioner, and a great Rabble.

'Offi. Room, room there—stand all by, make room for the prisoner.'

Pier. My friend not yet come?

'*Fri.* Why are you so obstinate?

'*Pier.* Why are you so troublesome, that a poor wretch can't die in peace,

'But you, like ravens, will be croaking round him?——

'*Fri.* Yet Heav'n——

'*Pier.* I tell thee Heav'n and I are friends:

'I ne'er broke peace with't yet, by cruel murders,

'Rapine, or perjury, or vile deceiving:

'But liv'd in moral justice towards all men:

'Nor am a foe to the most strong believers,

'Howe'er my own short-sighted faith confines me.

'*Fri.* But an all-seeing Judge——

'*Pier.* You say my conscience

'Must be my accuser; I have search'd that conscience,

'And find no records there of crimes that scare me.

'*Fri.* 'Tis strange, you should want faith.

'*Pier.* You want to lead

'My reason blindfold, like a hamper'd lion,

'Check'd of its nobler vigour; then when bated

'Down to obedient tameness, make it couch

'And shew strange tricks, which you call your signs of

'So silly souls are gull'd, and you get money. [faith:

'Away; no more. Captain, I'd have hereafter

'This fellow write no lies of my conversion,

'Because he has crept upon my troubled hours.'

Enter Jaffier.

Jaff. Hold: eyes be dry;

Heart, strengthen me to bear

This hideous sight, and humble me. Take

The last forgiveness of a dying friend,

Betray'd by my vile falsehood, to his ruin.

O Pierre!

Pier. Yet nearer.

Jaff. Crawling on my knees,

And prostrate on the earth let me approach thee:

How shall I look up to thy injur'd face,

That always us'd to smile with friendship on me?

It darts an air of so much manly virtue,

That

That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
And stripes are fitter for me than embraces.

Pier. Dear to my arms, tho' thou'st undone my fame,
I can't forget to love thee. Pr'ythee, *Jaffier*,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I am now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men like thee, to bless my journey.

Jaff. Good! I am the vilest creature, worse than e'er
Suffer'd the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.

' Why was I sent for to be us'd thus kindly?
' Call, call me villain, as I am! describe
' The foul complexion of my hateful deeds:
' Lead me to th' rack, and stretch me in thy stead.
' I've crimes enough to give it its full load,
' And do it credit: thou wilt but spoil the use on't.
' And honest men hereafter bear its figure
' About them, as a charm for treacherous friendship.'

Off. The time grows short, your friends are dead al-

Jaff. Dead! {ready.

Pier. Yes, dead, *Jaffier*; they've all dy'd like men too,
Worthy their character.

Jaff. And what must I do?

Pier. O *Jaffier*!

Jaff. Speak aloud thy burthen'd soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

Pier. Friend! Could'st thou yet be a friend, a gene-
rous friend,

I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heav'n knows, I want a friend.

Jaff. And a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

Pier. No! live, I charge thee, *Jaffier*.

Jaff. Yes, I will live:
But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd,
At such a rate, as *Venice* shall long groan for.

Pier. Wilt thou?

Jaff. I will, by Heav'n.

Pier. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh!—yet—shall I trust thee?

Jaff. No; I've been false already.

Pier. Do'st thou love me?

Jaff. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.

Pier.

Pier. Curse on this weakness.

[*He weeps.*]

Jaff. Tears ! Amazement ! Tears !

I never saw thee melted thus before ;
And know there's something labouring in thy bosom,
That must have vent : tho' I'm a villain, tell me.

Pier. See'st thou that engine ?

[*Pointing to the*

Jaff. Why ?

[*Wheel.*]

Pier. Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nations quarrels, and been crown'd with conquest,
Be expos'd, a common carcase, on a wheel ?

Jaff. Hah !

Pier. Speak ! is't fitting ?

Jaff. Fitting !

Pier. Yes ; is't fitting ?

Jaff. What's to be done ?

Pier. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attain it.

Off. The day grows late, sir.

Pier. I'll make haste. O *Jaffier* !

Tho' thou'st betray'd me, do me some way justice.

Jaff. No more of that : thy wishes shall be satisfy'd ;
I have a wife, and she shall bleed ; my child too
Yield up his little throat, and all
T' appease thee —

[*Going away, Pierre holds him.*]

Pier. No—this—no more.

[*He whispers Jaffier.*]

Jaff. Hah ! is't then so ?

Pier. Most certainly.

Jaff. I'll do't.

Pier. Remember.

Off. Sir.

Pier. Come, now I'm ready.

[*He and Jaffier ascend the Scaffold.*]

Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour ;

Keep off the rabble, that I may have room

To entertain my fate, and die with decency.

Come. [*Takes off his gown, Executioner prepares to*

' *Fri.* Son.

bind him.

' *Pier.* Hence, tempter.

' *Off.* Stand off, priest.

' *Pier.* I thank you, sir.'

You'll think on't ?

[*To Jaffier.*]

Jaff. 'T won't grow stale before to-morrow.

Pier.

Pier. Now, Jaffier ! now I'm going. Now—

[*Executioner having bound him.*

Jaff. Have at thee,

Thou honest heart, then—here—

[*Stabs him.*

And this is well too.

[*Stabs himself.*

'*Fri.* Damnable deed !'

Pier. Now thou hast indeed been faithful.

This was done nobly—We have deceiv'd the senate.

Jaff. Bravely.

Pier. Ha, ha ha !——oh ! oh !

[*Dies.*

Jaff. Now, ye curs'd rulers,

Thus of the blood y'ave shed, I make libation,
And sprinkle it mingling. May it rest upon you,
And all your race. Be henceforth peace a stranger
Within your walls ; let plagues and famine waste
Your generations—O poor *Belvidera* !

Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her,
A token that with my dying breath I bless'd her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.

I'm sick—I'm quiet.

[*Dies.*

'*Offi.* Bear this news to the senate,

'And guard their bodies. till there's further orders.

'Heav'n grant I die so well.' [Scene shuts upon them.

Soft Music. Enter *Belvidera* distracted, led by two
of her Women, *Priuli* and *Servants*.

Pri. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying
Heav'n.

Bel. Come, come, come, come, come, nay, come to bed,
Pr'ythee, my love. The winds ; hark how they whistle ;
And the rain beats : Oh ! how the weather shrinks me !
You are angry now, who cares ? Pish, no indeed,
Chuse then, I say you shall not go, you shall not,
Whip your ill-nature ; get you gone then ; Oh !
Are you return'd ? See, father, here's he's come again :
Am I to blame to love him ; O, thou dear one.
Why do you fly me ? Are you angry still then ?

Jaffier, where art thou ? Father, why do you do thus ?

Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's there some-
where.

Stand off, I say : What gone ? Remember't, tyrant :

I may revenge myself for this trick, one day.

I'll do't—I'll do't. '*Renault's* a nasty fellow ;

'Hang him. hang him, hang him.'

Enter

Enter Officer.

Pri. News, what news? [*Officer whispers Priuli.*

Offi. Most sad, sir;

Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabb'd *Pierre*, and next himself:
Both fell together.

Pri. Daughter.

Bel. Ha! look there!

My husband bloody, and his friend too! Murder!
Who has done this? Speak to me, thou sad vision;
On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Vanish'd—
Here they went down—Oh, I'll dig, dig the den up!
You shan't delude me thus. Ho, *Jaffier*, *Jaffier*!
Peep up, and give me but a look. I have him!
I've got him, father: Oh! 'now how I'll smuggle him!'
My love! my dear! my blessing! help me! help me!
'They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewel—

[*Dies.*

'*Maid.* She's dead;

'Breathless and dead.'

Pri. Oh! guard me from the sight on't.

Lead me into some place that's fit for mourning;
Where the free air, light, and the chearful sun,
May never enter: hang it round with black;
Set up one taper, that may light a day,
As long as I've to live: and there all leave me:
Sparing no tears, when you this tale relate,
But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

*THE Text is done, and now for application,
 And when that's ended, pass your approbation.
 Though the Conspiracy's prevented here,
 Methinks I see another hatching there :
 And there's a certain faction fair would sway,
 If they had strength enough, and damn this play :
 But this the author boldly bid me say,
 If any take this plainness in ill part,
 He's glad on't from the bottom of his heart.
 Poets in honour of the truth should write,
 With the same spirit brave men for it fight.
 And though against him causeless hatred rise,
 And daily where he goes of late he spies
 The scowls of jullen and revengeful eyes ;
 'Tis what he knows, with much contempt, to bear,
 And serves a cause too good to let him fear.
 He fears no poison from an incens'd drub,
 No ruffian's five-foot sword, nor rascal's stab ;
 Nor any other snares of mischief laid,
 Not a Resi-Alley cudgel ambuscade,
 From any private cause where malice reigns,
 Or general pique all blockheads law to brains ;
 Nothing shall damn his pen, when truth does call,
 No, not the * picture mangier at Guildhall.
 The rebel tribe, of which that vermin's one,
 Have now set forward, and their course begun ;
 And while that prince's figure they deface,
 As they before had massacred his name,
 Durst their base fears but lock him in the face,
 They'd use his person as they've us'd his fame :
 A face in which such lineaments they read
 Of that great martyr's, whose rich blood they shed,
 That their rebellious hate they still retain,
 And in his son would murder him again.
 With indignation then let each brave heart
 Rouze and unite, to take his injur'd part ;
 'Till royal love and goodness call him home,
 And songs of triumph melt him as he come :
 'Till Heav'n his honour and our peace restore,
 And villains never wrong his virtue more.*

* He that cut the Duke of York's picture.

F I N I S.

T A M E R L A N E

A

T R A G E D Y,

WRITTEN BY

N. R O W E, Esq;

Marked with the Variations in the

M A N A G E R ' s B O O K,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

*Magnus ad altum
Fulminat Euphraten bello, victorque volentes
Per Populos dat jura, triamque afficit Olympo.*

Virg. Georg.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR T. AND W. LOWNDES, J. NICHOLS,
W. NICOLL, AND S. BLADON.

M.DCC.LXXXIV.

¶ The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as at Line 16 in Page 9, to Line 9 in Page 11.

To the Right Honourable

W I L L I A M,

LORD MARQUIS of Hartington,

(Afterwards Duke of Devonshire.)

MY LORD,

EVERY body is now so full of business, that things of this kind, which are generally taken for the entertainment of leisure hours only, look like impertinence and interruption. I am sure it is a reason why I ought to beg your Lordship's pardon, for troubling you with this tragedy; not but that poetry has always been, and will still be, the entertainment of all wise men, that have any delicacy in their knowledge: Yet, at so critical a juncture as this is, I must confess, I think your Lordship ought to give intirely into those public affairs, which at this time seem to demand you. It is that happy turn which your Lordship has to business, that right understanding of your country's interest, and that constant zeal to pursue it, that just thinking, that strong and persuasive elocution, that firm and generous resolution, which upon all occasions you have shewn in parliaments; and, to add that which is the crowning good quality, your Lordship's continual adherence and unshaken loyalty to His present Majesty, which make you at this time so necessary to the public. I must confess (tho' there's no part in your Lordship's character but what the world should be fond of), I cannot help distinguishing the last instance very particularly. It is doing, methinks, such a justice to goodness, to greatness, and to right reason, that posterity will believe there could be no man of good sense, but what must have agreed with your Lordship in it. When the next age shall read the history of this, what excuse can they make for those who did

not admire a prince whose life has been a series of good offices done to mankind? When they shall reckon up his labours from the battle of Seneff, to some glorious action which shall be his last (and which I therefore hope is very far removed from the present time), will they ever believe that he could have been too well loved, or too faithfully served and defended? The great things which he did before we had that immediate interest in him, which we now happily have, is a noble and just subject for panegyric; but as benefits done to others can never touch us so sensibly as those we receive ourselves, tho' the actions may be equally great; so, methinks, I can hardly have patience to run back to his having saved his own country, when I consider he has since done the same for us; let that be sufficient to us, for all we can say of him, or do for him. What dangers and difficulties has he not struggled through, for the honour and safety of these kingdoms? 'Tis a common praise, and what every one speaks, to say, he has continually exposed his life for his people: But there are some things more particular in his character, some things rarely found amongst the policies of princes; a zeal for religion, moderated by reason, without the rage and fire of persecution; a charitable compassion for those who cannot be convinced, and an unalterable perseverance in those principles of whose truth he is satisfied; a desire of war for the sake of peace, and of peace for the good and honour of his subjects equally with his own; a pious care for composing factions, though to foment them might make him arbitrary; and a generous ambition, that only aims at power, to enable him to do good to all the rest of the world. I might add here, that inviolable and religious observance of his royal word, which the best part of the powers of Europe have so frequently, and so happily for themselves, depended upon in the greatest emergencies; but as this virtue

tue is generally reckoned as no more than that common honesty which the meanest man would blush to be without, so it can hardly claim a place amongst the more particular excellences of a great prince. It were to be wished indeed, that the world were honest to such a degree, and that there were not that scandalous defect of common morality. Certainly nothing can be more shocking to humanity, to the peace and order of the world, nothing can approach nearer to that savage state of nature, in which every man is to eat his fellow if he can master him, than an avowed liberty of breaking through all the most solemn engagements of public faith. 'Tis something that brands a man with an infamy which nothing can explain his meaning, he may protest, and pretend to extenuate or wipe out; but the world has generally too much indignation for the affront, to bear it at that easy rate. Ministers and Secretaries of state may display their own parts in memorials with as much pomp and flourish as they please: I fancy the common answer upon such occasion will always be, "You have deceived us grossly, and we never can nor will trust you any more." When this vice comes amongst men of the first rank, it is the more shocking, and I could wish there were none such to whose charge it might be laid.

Some people (who do me a very great honour in it) have fancied, that, in the person of Tamerlane, I have alluded to the greatest character of the present age. I don't know whether I ought not to apprehend a great deal of danger from avowing a design like this: It may be a talk indeed worthy the greatest genius, which this or any other time has produced; but therefore I ought not to stand the shock of a parallel, lest it should be seen, to my disadvantage, how far the *Hero* has transcended the poet's thought. There are many features, it is true, in that great

A 3

man's

vi EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

man's life not unlike his Majesty; his courage, his piety, his moderation, his justice, and his fatherly love of his people, but, above all, his hate of tyranny and oppression, and his zealous care for the common good of mankind, carry a large resemblance of him: Several incidents are alike in their stories; and there wants nothing to his Majesty but such a deciding victory as that by which Tamerlane gave peace to the world: That is yet to come; but I hope we may reasonably expect it from the unanimity of the present Parliament, and so formidable a force as that unanimity will give life and vigour to.

If your Lordship can find any thing in this poem like a Prince, who is so justly the object of your Lordship's and indeed of the world's veneration, I persuade myself it will prevail with you to forgive every thing else that you find amiss: You will excuse the faults in writing, for the goodness of the intention. I hope too, your Lordship will not be displeased that I take this opportunity of renewing the honour which I formerly had, to be known to your Lordship and which gives me at once the pleasure of expressing those just and dutiful sentiments I have for his Majesty, and that strong inclination which I have always had to be thought,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

humble Servant,

N. R O W E.

P R O L O G U E.

*O*F all the Muse's various labours, none
 Have lasted longer, or have higher flown,
 Than those that tell the same by antient heroes won.
 With pleasure Rome and great Augustus heard
 "Arms and the man" sung by the Mantuan bard:
 In spite of time, the sacred story lives,
 And Cæsar and his empire still survives.
 Like him (tho' much unequal to his fame)
 Our author makes a pious prince his theme:
 High with the foremost names in arms he stood,
 Had fought and suffer'd, for his country's good,
 Yet sought not fame, but peace in fields of blood.
 Safe under him his happy people sat,
 And griev'd, at distance, for their neighbours' fate:
 Whilst with success a Turkish monarch crown'd,
 Like spreading flame, deform'd the nation's round;
 With sword and fire he forc'd his impious way
 To lawless power, and universal sway;
 Some abject states, for fear, the tyrant join,
 Others, for gold, their liberties resign,
 And venal princes sold their right divine:
 Till Heaven, the growing evil to redress,
 Sent Tamerlane, to give the world a peace.
 The hero, rous'd, asserts the glorious cause,
 And to the field the chearful soldier draws:
 Around in crowds his valiant leaders wait,
 Anxious for glory, and secure of fate;
 Well pleas'd, once more, to venture on his file,
 And prove that faith again, which had so oft been try'd.
 The peaceful fathers, who in senates meet,
 Approve an enterprize so just, so great;
 While with their prince's arms, their voice thus join'd,
 Gains half the praise of having sav'd mankind.
 Ev'n in a circle, where, like this, the Fair
 Were met, the bright assembly did declare,
 Their house, with one consent, were for the war;
 Each urg'd her lover to unsheathe his sword,
 And never spare a man who broke his word.
 Thus fir'd, the brave on to the danger press;
 Their arms were crown'd abroad with just success,
 And blest at home with beauty, and with peace.

Dramatis Personæ, 1784.

M E N.

At Drury Lane.

At Covent Garden.
 Mr. HENDERSON.
 Mr. KEMELE.
 Mr. WHITFIELD.
 Mr. WROUGHTON.

Tamerlane

Bajazet,

Asalla,

Monetes,

Seratoles,

Prince of Tanais,

Omar,

Mirvan,

Zama,

Halv.

Dervise,

Mr. SMITH.

Mr. PALMER

Mr. GRIST.

Mr.

Mr. FARREN.

Mr. WRIGHTEN.

Mr. HURST.

Mr. NORRIS.

Mr. WRIGHT.

Mr. CHAPLIN.

Mr. BRANSEY.

Mr. BOOTH.

Mr. FEARON.

Mr. J. BATES.

Mr. THOMPSON.

W O M E N.

Arpasia,

Selima.

Miss YOUNGE.

Miss HOPKINS.

Mrs. BATES.

Mrs. KEMELE.

Perthian and Tartar Soldiers, Mutes belonging to Bajazet, other Attendants

SCENE, Tamerlane's Camp, near Angoria in Galatia.

ACT I. SCENE *before Tamerlane's tent.*

Enter the Prince of Tanais, Zama, and Mirvan.

Prince. **H**AIL to the sun! from whose returning light
The chearful foldier's arms new lustre take,
To deck the pomp of battle. Oh, my friends!
Was ever such a glorious face of war?
See, from this height, how all Galatia's plains
With nations numberless are cover'd o'er;
Who, like a deluge, hide the face of earth,
And leave no object in the vast horizon,
But glitt'ring arms and skies.

Zam. Our Asian world
From this important day expects a lord;
This day they hope an end of all their woes,
Of tyranny, of bondage, and oppression,
From our victorious emp'ror, Tamerlane.

Mir. Well has our holy Alha mark'd him out
The scourge of lawless pride, and dire ambition,
The great avenger of the groaning world.
Well has he worn the sacred cause of justice
Upon his prop'rous sword. Approving Heav'n
Still crown'd the righteous warrior with success;
As if it said, Go forth, and be my champion,
Thou, most like me of all my works below.

Pr. No lust of rule, the common vice of kings,
No furious zeal, inspir'd by hot-brain'd priests,
Ill hid beneath religion's specious name,
E'er drew his temperate courage to the field:
But to redress an injur'd people's wrongs,
To save the weak one from the strong oppressor,
Is all his end of war. And when he draws
The sword to punish, like relenting Heav'n,
He seems unwilling to deface his kind.

Mir. So rich his soul in ev'ry virtuous grace,
That, had not nature made him great by birth,
Yet all the brave had fought him for their friend.
The Christian prince, Axalla, nicely bred,
In polish'd arts of European courts,
For him forsakes his native Italy,

‘ And lives a happy exile in his service.

‘ *Pr.* Pleas’d with the gentle manners of that prince,
‘ Our mighty lord is lavish to his friendship;
‘ Tho’ Omar and the Tartar lords repine,
‘ And loudly tax their monarch as too partial.

‘ *Zam.* Ere the mid-hour of night, from tent to tent,
‘ Unweary’d, thro’ the num’rous host he past,
‘ Viewing with careful eyes each sev’ral quarter;
‘ Whilst from his looks, as from Divinity,
‘ The soldiers took presage, and cry’d, Lead on,
‘ Great Alha, and our emperor, lead on,
‘ To victory and everlasting fame.’

Mir. Hear you of Bajazet?

Pr. Late in the evening

A slave of near attendance on his person
‘ Scap’d to our camp. From him we learn’d, the tyrant,
With rage redoubled, for the fight prepares;
Some accidental passion fires his breast
(Love, as ’tis thought, for a fair Grecian captive),
And adds new horror to his native fury.

‘ For five returning fims, scarce was he seen
‘ By any the most favour’d of his court,
‘ But in lascivious ease, among his women,
‘ Liv’d from the war retir’d; or else alone,
‘ In sullen mood, sat meditating plagues
‘ And ruin to the world; ’till yester morn,
‘ Like fire that lab’ring upwards rends the earth,
‘ He burst with fury from his tent, commanding
‘ All should be ready for the fight this day.

‘ *Zam.* I know his temper well, since in his court,
‘ Companion of the brave Axalla’s embassy,
‘ I oft observ’d him proud, impatient
‘ Of aught superior, e’en of Heaven that made him.
‘ Fond of false glory, of the savage pow’r
‘ Of ruling without reason, of confounding
‘ Just and unjust, by an unbounded will;
‘ By whom religion, honour, all the bands
‘ That ought to hold the jarring world in peace,
‘ Were held the tricks of state, snares of wise princes,
‘ To draw their easy neighbours to destruction.

‘ *Mir.* Thrice, by our law and prophet has he sworn,
‘ By the world’s Lord and Maker, lasting peace
‘ With our great master, and his royal friend

‘ The

' The Grecian emperor ; as oft, regardless
 ' Of plighted faith, with most unkingly baseness,
 ' Without a war proclaim'd or cause pretended,
 ' Has ta'en th' advantage of their absent arms,
 ' To waste with sword and fire their fruitful fields :
 ' Like some accursed fiend, who, 'scap'd from hell,
 ' Poisons the balmy air thro' which he flies,
 ' He blasts the bearded corn, and loaded branches,
 ' The lab'ring hind's best hopes, and marks his way
 ' with ruin.'

Pr. But see his fate ! The mighty Tamerlane
 Comes, like the proxy of enquiring Heav'n,
 To judge, and to redress. *[Flourish of trumpets.]*

Enter Tamerlane, guards, and other attendants.

Tam. Yet, yet a little, and destructive Slaughter
 Shall rage around, and mar this beauteous prospect.
 Pass but an hour, which stands betwixt the lives
 Of thousands and eternity, what change
 Shall hasty Death make in yon glitt'ring plain ?
 Oh, thou fell monster, War ! that in a moment
 Lay't waste the noblest part of the creation,
 The boast and master-piece of the great Maker,
 That wears in vain th' impression of his image,
 Unprivileg'd from thee.

Health to our friends, and to our arms success !

[To the Prince, Zama, and Mirvan.]

Such as the cause for which we fight deserves.

Pr. Nor can we ask beyond what Heaven bestows,
 Preventing still our wishes. See, great sir,
 The universal joy your soldiers wear,
 Omen of prosp'rous battle.

Impatient of the tedious night, in arms
 Watchful they stood, expecting op'ning day ;
 And now are hardly by their leaders held
 From darting on the foe. ' Like a hot courser,
 ' That bounding paws the mould'ring soil, disdain
 ' The rein that checks him, eager for the race.'

Tam. Yes, prince, I mean to give a loose to war.
 This morn Axalla, with my Parthian horse,
 Arrives to join me. He who, like a storm,
 Swept with his flying squadrons all the plain
 Between Angoria's walls and yon tall mountains,
 That seem to reach the clouds ; and now he comes,

Loaden with spoils and conquest, to my aid.

[*Trumpets flourish.*]

Zam. These trumpets speak his presence——

Enter Axalla, who kneels to Tamerlane.

Tam. Welcome! thou worthy partner of my laurels,
Thou brother of my choice, a band more sacred
Than nature's brittle tie. By holy friendship,
Glorv and fame stood still for thy arrival;
My soul seem'd wanting in its better half,
And languish'd for thy absence; 'like a prophet,
'That waits the inspiration of his God.'

Ax. My emperor! My ever royal master!
To whom my secret soul more lowly bends,
Than forms of outward worship can express;
How poorly does your soldier pay this goodness,
Who wears his every hour of life out for you!
Yet 'tis his all, and what he has he offers;
Nor now disdain t' accept the gift he brings,

Enter Selima, Monefes, Stratocles, prisoners; guards, mutes, &c.

This earnest of your fortune. See, my lord,
The noblest prize that ever grac'd my arms!
Approach, my fair——

Tam. This is indeed to conquer,
And well to be rewarded for thy conquest;
The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unsully'd beauty,
Softness, and sweetest innocence she wears,
And looks like nature in the world's first spring.
But say, Axalla——

Sel. Most renown'd in war, [Kneeling to Tam.
Look with compassion on a captive maid,
'Tho' born of hostile blood; nor let my birth,
Deriv'd from Bajazet, prevent that mercy
Which every subject of your fortune finds.
War is the province of ambitious man,
Who tears the miserable world for empire;
Whilst our weak sex, incapable of wrong,
On either side claims privilege of safety.

Tam. [Raising her.] Rise, royal maid! the pride of
haughty pow'r
Pays homage, not receives it, from the fair.
Thy angry father fiercely calls me forth,
And urges me unwillingly to arms.

Yet,

Yet, though our frowning battles menace death
And mortal conflict, think not that we hold
Thy innocence and virtue as our foe.
Here, till the fate of Asia is decided,
In safety stay. To-morrow is your own.
Nor grieve for who may conquer, or who lose;
Fortune on either side shall wait thy wishes.

Sel. Where shall my wonder and my praise begin?
From the successful labours of thy arms;
Or from a theme more soft and full of peace,
Thy mercy and thy gentleness? Oh, Tamerlane!
What can I pay thee for this noble usage,
But grateful praise? So Heaven itself is paid.
Give peace, ye Pow'rs above, peace to mankind;
Nor let my father wage unequal war
Against the force of such united virtues. [prospect

Tam. Heav'n hear thy pious wish!——But since our
Looks darkly on futurity, till Fate
Determine for us, let thy beauty's safety
Be my Axalla's care; in whose glad eyes
I read what joy the pleasing service gives him.
Is there amongst thy other pris'ners aught [To Axalla.
Worthy our knowledge?

Ax. This brave man, my lord, [Pointing to Mon.
With long resistance held the combat doubtful.
His party, prest with numbers, soon grew faint,
And would have left their charge an easy prey;
Whilst he alone, undaunted at the odds,
Tho' hopelets to escape, fought well and firmly;
Nor yielded till, o'ermatch'd by many hands,
He seem'd to shame our conquest, whilst he own'd it.

Tam. Thou speak'st him as a soldier should a soldier,
Just to the worth he finds. I would not war [To Mon.
With aught that wears thy virtuous stamp of greatness.
Thy habit speaks thee Christian—Nay, yet more,
My soul seems pleas'd to take acquaintance with thee,
As if ally'd to thine: perhaps 'tis sympathy
Of honest minds; like strings wound up in music,
Where, by one touch, both utter the same harmony.
Why art thou then a friend to Bajazet?
And why my enemy?

Mon. If human wisdom
Could point out every action of our lives.
And say, Let it be thus, in spite of fate

Or partial fortune, then I had not been
The wretch I am.

Tam. The brave meet every accident
With equal minds. Think nobler of thy foes,
Than to account thy chance in war an evil.

Mon. Far, far from that: I rather hold it grievous
That I was forc'd ev'n but to seem your enemy;
Nor think the baseness of a vanquish'd slave
Moves me to flatter for precarious life,
Or ill-bought freedom, when I swear, by Heav'n,
Were I to choose from all mankind a master,
It should be Tamerlane.

Tam. A noble freedom
Dwells with the brave, unknown to fawning sycophants,
And claims a privilege of being believ'd.
I take thy praise as earnest of thy friendship.

Mon. Still you prevent the homage I should offer.
Oh, royal sir! let my misfortunes plead,
And wipe away the hostile mark I wore.
I was, when not long since my fortune hail'd me,
Bless'd to my wish; I was the prince Monefes,
Born and bred up to greatness: witness the blood,
Which, through successive heroes veins, ally'd
To our Greek emperors, roll'd down to me,
Feeds the bright flame of glory in my heart.

Tam. Ev'n that, that princely tie, should bind thee
If virtue were not more than all alliance. [to me,

Mon. I have a sister, Oh, severe remembrance!
Our noble house's, nay, her sex's pride;
Nor think my tongue too lavish, if I speak her
Fair as the faine of virtue, and yet chaste
As its cold precepts; wise beyond her sex
And blooming youth; soft as forgiving mercy,
Yet greatly brave and jealous for her honour:
Such as she was, to say I barely lov'd her,
Is poor to my soul's meaning. From our infancy
'Till here grew a mutual tenderness between us,
Till not long since her vows were kindly plighted
'To a young lord, the equal of her birth.
The happy day was fix'd, and now approaching,
When faithless Bajazet (upon whose honour,
In solemn treaty given, the Greeks depended)

With sudden war broke in upon the country,
Secure of peace, and for defence unready.

Tam. Let majesty no more be held divine,
Since kings, who are call'd gods, profane themselves.

Mon. Among the wretches, whom that deluge swept
Away to slavery, myself and sister,
'Then passing near the frontiers to the court,
(Which waited for her nuptials) were surpris'd,
And made the captives of the tyrant's pow'r.
Soon as we reach'd his court, we found our usage,
Beyond what we expected, fair and noble ;
'Twas then the storm of your victorious arms
Look'd black, and seem'd to threaten, when he prest me
(By oft repeating instances) to draw
My sword for him : but when he found my soul
Disdain'd his purpose, he more fiercely told me,
That my Arpasia, my lov'd sister's fate,
Depended on my courage shewn for him.
I had long learnt to hold myself at nothing ;
But for her sake, to ward the blow from her,
I bound my service to the man I hated.
Six days are past, since, by the sultan's order,
I left the pledge of my return behind,
And went to guard this princess to his camp :
The rest the brave Axalla's fortune tells you.

Tam. Wisely the tyrant strove to prop his cause,
By leaguings with thy virtue ; but just Heav'n
Has torn thee from his side, and left him naked
To the avenging bolt that drives upon him.
Forget the name of captive, and I wish
I could as well restore that fair-one's freedom,
Whose loss hangs heavy on thee : yet ere night,
Perhaps, we may deserve thy friendship nobler ;
'Th' approaching storm may cast thy shipwreck'd wealth
Back to thy arms : till that be past, since war
(Tho' in the justest cause) is ever doubtful,
I will not ask thy sword to aid my victory,
Lest it should hurt that hostage of thy valour
Our common foe detains.

Mon. Let Bajazet
Bend to his yoke repining slaves by force ;
You, sir, have found a nobler way to empire,
Lord of the willing world.

Tam.

Tam. Oh, my Axalla!

Thou hast a tender soul, apt for compassion,

And art thyself a lover and a friend.

Does not this prince's fortune move thy temper?

Ax. Yes, sir, I mourn the brave Monefes' fate,

The merit of his virtue hardly match'd

With disadvent'rous chance: yet, prince, allow me,

Allow me, from th' experience of a lover,

To say, one person whom your story mention'd

(If he survive) is far beyond you wretched:

You nam'd the bridegroom of your beauteous sister.

Mon. I did. Oh, most accurst!

Ax. Think what he feels,

Dash'd in the fiercencis of his expectation:

Then, when th' approaching minute of possession

Had wound imagination to the height,

Think if he lives!

Mon. He lives! he does; 'tis true

He lives! But how? To be a dog, and dead,

Were paradise to such a state as his:

He holds down life, as children do a potion,

With strong reluctance and convulsive strugglings,

Whilst his misfortunes press him to disgorge it.

Tam. Spare the remembrance, 'tis an useless grief,

And adds to the misfortune by repeating.

The revolution of a day may bring

Such turns, as Heav'n itself could scarce have promis'd,

Far, far beyond thy wish: let that hope cheer thee.

Haste, my Axalla, to dispose with safety

The beauteous charge, and on the foe revenge

The pain which absence gives; thy other care,

Honour and arms, now summon thy attendance.

Now do thy office well, my soul! Remember

Thy cause, the cause of Heaven and injur'd Earth.

O thou Supreme! if thy great spirit warms

My glowing breast, and fires my soul to arms,

Grant that my sword, assisted by thy pow'r,

This day may peace and happiness restore,

That war and lawless rage may vex the world no more.

[*Exit* Tamerlane, Monefes, Stratocles, prince of

Tanais, Zama, Mirvan, and attendants.

Ax. The battle calls, and bids me haste to leave thee;
Oh, Selima! — But let destruction wait.

Are

Are there not hours enough for blood and slaughter?
 This moment shall be love's, and I will waite it
 In soft complainings, for thy sighs and coldness,
 For thy forgetful coldness; even at Birza,
 When in thy father's court my eyes first own'd thee,
 Fairer than light, the joy of their beholding,
 Even then thou wert not thus.

' *Sel.* Art not thou chang'd,
 ' Christian Axalla? Art thou still the same?
 ' Those were the gentle hours of peace, and thou
 ' The world's good angel, that didst kindly join
 ' Its mighty masters in harmonious friendship:
 ' But since those joys that once were ours are lost,
 ' Forbear to mention 'em, and talk of war;
 ' Talk of thy conquest and my chains, Axalla.

' *Ax.* Yet I will listen, fair, unkind, upbraider,
 ' Yet I will listen to thy charming accents,
 ' Altho' they make me curse my fame and fortune,
 ' My laurel wreaths, and all the glorious trophies
 ' For which the valiant bleed—Oh, thou unjust one!
 ' Dost thou then envy me this small return
 ' My niggard fate has made for all the mournings,
 ' For all the pains, for all the sleepless nights,
 ' That cruel absence brings?

' *Sel.* Away, deceiver!
 ' I will not hear thy soothing. Is it thus
 ' That Christian lovers prove the faith they swear?
 ' Are war and slavery the soft endearments
 ' With which they court the beauties they admire?
 ' 'Twas well my heart was cautious of believing
 ' Thy vows, and thy protesting. Know, my conqueror,
 ' Thy sword has vanquish'd but the half of Selima;
 ' Her soul disdains thy victory.

' *Ax.* Hear, sweet Heav'n!
 ' Hear the fair tyrant, how she wrests love's laws,
 ' As she had vow'd my ruin! What is conquest?
 ' What joy have I from that but to behold thee,
 ' To kneel before thee, and with lifted eyes
 ' To view thee, as Devotion does a saint,
 ' With awful, trembling pleasure; then to swear
 ' Thou art the queen and mistress of my soul?
 ' Has not ev'n Tamerlane (whose word, next Heaven's,
 ' Makes fate at second-hand) bid thee disclaim

' Thy

‘ Thy fears? And dost thou call thyself a slave,
 ‘ Only to try how far the sad impression
 ‘ Can sink into Axalla!

‘ *Sel.* Oh, Axalla!

‘ Ought I to hear you?

‘ *Ax.* Come back, ye hours,

‘ And tell my Selima what she has done!

‘ Bring back the time, when to her father’s court

‘ I came ambassador of peace from Tamerlane;

‘ When, hid by conscious darkness and disguise,

‘ I past the dangers of the watchful guards,

‘ Bold as the youth who nightly swam the Hellespont:

‘ Then, then she was not sworn the foe of love;

‘ When, as my soul confess’d its flame, and sued

‘ In moving sounds for pity, she frown’d rarely,

‘ But, blushing, heard me tell the gentle tale;

‘ Nay, ev’n confess’d, and told me softly, sighing,

‘ She thought there was no guilt in love like mine.’

Sel. Young, and unskilful in the world’s false arts,
 I suffer’d love to steal upon my softness,

And warm me with a lambent guiltless flame:

Yes, I have heard thee swear a thousand times,

And call the conscious Pow’rs of heav’n to witness

The tend’rest, truest, everlasting passion.

But, Oh! ’tis past: and I will charge remembrance

To banish the fond image from my soul.

Since thou art sworn the foe of royal Bajazet,

I have resolv’d to hate thee.

Ax. Is it possible!

Hate is not in thy nature; thy whole frame

Is harmony, without one jarring atom.

Why dost thou force thy eyes to wear this coldness?

It damps the springs of life. Oh! bid me die,

Much rather bid me die, if it be true,

That thou hast sworn to hate me.—

Sel. Let life and death

Wait the decision of the bloody field;

Nor can thy fate, my conqueror, depend

Upon a woman’s hate. Yet, since you urge

A power, which once perhaps I had, there is

But one request that I can make with honour.

Ax. Oh, name it! say!

Sel.

Scl. Forego your right of war,
And render me this instant to my father.

Ax. Impossible! — The tumult of the battle,
That hastes to join, cuts off all means of commerce
Betwixt the armies.

Scl. Swear then to perform it,
Which way soe'er the chance of war determines,
On my first instance.

Ax. By the sacred majesty
Of Heaven, to whom we kneel, I will obey thee;
Yes, I will give thee this severest proof
Of my soul's vow'd devotion; I will part with thee,
(Thou cruel to command it!) I will part with thee,
As wretches that are doubtful of hereafter
Part with their lives, unwilling, loth, and fearful,
And trembling at futurity. But is there nothing,
No small return that honour can afford,
For all this waste of love?

Scl. The gifts of captives
' Wear somewhat of constraint; and generous minds
' Disdain to give, where freedom of the choice
' Does but seem wanting

Ax. What! not one kind look? [** Trumpets.*]
Then thou art chang'd indeed. * Hark, I am summon'd,
And thou wilt send me forth like one unblest'd,
Whom fortune has forsaken, and ill fate
Mark'd for destruction. ' Thy surprising coldness
' Hangs on my soul, and weighs my courage down:
' And the first feeble blow I meet shall raze me
' From all remembrance: ' nor is life or fame
Worthy my care, since I am lost to thee. [*Going*]

Scl. Ha! Goest thou to the fight? —

Ax. I do — Farewel! —

Scl. What! and no more! A sigh heaves in my breast,
And stops the struggling accents on my tongue,
Else, sure, I should have added something more,
And made our parting softer.

Ax. Give it way:
The niggard honour that affords not love
Forbids not pity —

Scl. Fate perhaps has set
' This day the period of thy life and conquests;
' And I shall see thee borne at evening back
' A breath-

' A breathless corse.—Oh! can I think on that,
 ' And hide my sorrows?—No—they will have way,
 ' And all the vital air that life draws in
 ' Is render'd back in sighs.

' *Ax.* The murm'ring gale revives the drooping flame,
 ' That at thy coldness languish'd in my breast:
 ' So breathe the gentle zephyrs on the spring,
 ' And waken every plant and od'rous flower,
 ' Which winter frost had blatted, to new life.

' *Scf.* To see thee for this moment, and no more.—
 ' Oh! help me to resolve against this tenderness,
 ' That charms my fierce resentments, and presents thee
 ' Not as thou art, mine and my father's foe,
 ' But as thou wert, when first thy moving accents
 ' Won me to hear; when, as I listen'd to thee,
 ' The happy hours past by us unperceiv'd,
 ' So was my soul fix'd to the soft enchantment.

' *Ax.* Let me be still the same; I am, I must be.
 If it were possible my heart could stray,
 One look from thee would call it back again,
 And fix the wanderer for ever thine.

Scf. Where is my boasted resolution now?

[*Sinking into his arms.*]

Oh, yes! thou art the same; my heart joins with thee,

' And to betray me will believe thee still;
 ' It dances to the sounds that mov'd it first,
 ' And owns at once the weakness of my soul:
 ' So, when some skilful artist strikes the strings,
 ' The magic numbers rouse our sleeping passions,
 ' And force us to confess our grief and pleasure.'

Alas! Axalla, say—dost thou not pity

My artless innocence, and easy fondness?

Oh! turn thee from me, or I die with blushing.

Ax. No, let me rather gaze, for ever gaze,
 And bless the new-born glories that adorn thee;

' From every blush, that kindles in thy cheeks,
 ' Ten thousand little Loves and Graces spring

' To revel in the roses—'twill not be.' [Trumpets.

This envious trumpet calls, and tears me from thee—

Scf. My fears increase, and doubly press me now:

I charge thee, if thy sword comes cross my father,
 Stop for a moment, and remember me.

Ax.

Ax. Oh, doubt not but his life shall be my care,
Ev'n dearer than my own——

Sel. Guard that for me too.

Ax. Oh, Selima! thou hast restor'd my quiet,
The noble ardour of the war, with love
Returning, brightly burns within my breast,
And bids me be secure of all hereafter.

' So cheers some pious saint a dying sinner
' (Who trembled at the thought of pains to come)
' With Heaven's forgiveness, and the hopes of mercy:
' At length, the tumult of his soul appeas'd,
' And every doubt and anxious scruple eas'd,
' Boldly he proves the dark, uncertain road,
' The peace, his holy comforter bestow'd,
' Guides and protects him, like a guardian god.' [*Exit.*]

Sel. In vain all arts a love sick virgin tries,
Affects to frown, and seem severely wise,
In hopes to cheat the wary lover's eyes:
If the dear youth her pity strives to move,
And pleads, with tenderness, the cause of love!
Nature asserts her empire in her heart,
And kindly takes the faithful lover's part.
By love herself, and nature thus betray'd,
No more she trusts in pride's fantastic aid,
But bids her eyes confess the yielding maid.

[*Exit Selima, guards following.*]

A C T II. SCENE, Tamerlaine's camp.

Enter Monefes.

Mon. **T**HE dreadful business of the war is o'er;
And Slaughter, that from yester' morn 'till
even,
With giant steps, pass'd striding o'er the field,
Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
And slumbers o'er her prey; while from this camp
The cheerful sounds of victory and Tamerlane
Beat the high arch of heaven. ' Deciding Fate,
' That crowns him with the spoils of such a day,

' Has

‘ Has giv’n it as an earnest of the world
 ‘ That shortly shall be his.’

Enter Stratocles.

My Stratocles!

Most happily return’d; might I believe
 Thou bring’st me any joy?

Stra. With my best diligence,
 This night, I have enquir’d of what concerns you.
 Scarce was the sun, who shone upon the horror
 Of the past day, sunk to the western ocean,
 When, by permission from the prince Axalla,
 I mixt among the tumult of the warriors
 Returning from the battle: here a troop
 Of hardy Parthians, red with honest wounds,
 Confest the conquest they had well deserv’d:
 There a dejected crew of wretched captives,
 ‘ Sore with unprofitable hurts, and groaning
 ‘ Under new bondage,’ followed sadly after
 The haughty victor’s heels. But that which fully
 Crown’d the success of Tamerlane, was Bajazet,
 Fall’n, like the proud archangel, from the height
 Where once (ev’n next to majesty divine)
 Enthron’d he sat, down to the vile descent
 And lowness of a slave: but, Oh! to speak
 The rage, the fierceness, and the indignation,
 It bars all words, and cuts description short.

Mon. Then he is fall’n! that come, which on high
 Portended ruin; he has spent his blaze,
 And shall distract the world with fears no more.
 ‘ Sure it must bode me well; for oft my soul
 ‘ Has started into tumult at his name,
 ‘ As if my guardian angel took the alarm
 ‘ At the approach of somewhat mortal to me.’
 But say, my friend, what hear’st thou of Arpasia?
 For there my thoughts, my every care is center’d.

Stra. Tho’ on that purpose still I bent my search,
 Yet nothing certain could I gain, but this:
 That in the pillage of the sultan’s tent
 Some women were made pris’ners, who this morning
 Were to be offer’d to the emperor’s view;
 Their names and qualities, tho’ oft enquiring,
 I could not learn.

Mon.

Mon. Then must my soul still labour
Beneath uncertainty and anxious doubt,
The mind's worst state. The tyrant's ruin gives me
But a half ease.

Stra. 'Twas said, not far from hence
The captives were to wait the emperor's passage.

Mon. Haste we to find the place. Oh, my Arpasia!
Shall we not meet? 'Why hangs my heart thus heavy,
'Like death within my bosom? Oh, 'tis well,
'The joy of meeting pays the pangs of absence,
'Else who could bear it?'

When thy lov'd sight shall bless my eyes again,
Then I will own, I ought not to complain,
Since that sweet hour is worth whole years of pain.

[*Exeunt Monefes and Stratocles,*

SCENE *tht inside of a magnificent tent. Symphony of
warlike music.*

*Enter Tamerlane, Axalla, Prince of Tanais, Zama,
Mirvan, soldiers, and other attendants.*

Ax. From this auspicious day the Parthian name
Shall date its birth of empire, and extend,
Ev'n from the dawning East to utmost Thule,
The limits of its sway.

Pr. Nations unknown
Where yet the Roman eagles never flew,
Shall pay their homage to victorious Tamerlane;
Bend to his valour and superior virtue,
And own, that conquest is not given by chance,
But, bound by fatal and resistless merit,
Waits on his arms.

Tam. It is too much: you dress me,
Like an usurper, in the borrow'd attributes
Of injur'd Heaven. Can we call conquest ours?
Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride,
Vaunt of himself, and say, Thus have I done this?
Oh, vain pretence to greatness! Like the moon,
We borrow all the brightness which we boast,
Dark in ourselves and useless. If that hand
'That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,
Crown us with fame, and gild our clay with honour,

'Twere

'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,
And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

Ax. With such unshaken temper of the soul
To bear the swelling tide of prosp'rous fortune,
Is to deserve that fortune: in adversity,
The mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest,
Which, in success dissolving, sinks to ease,
And loses all her firmness.

Tam. Oh, Axalla!

Could I forget I am a man, as thou art;
Would not the winter's cold, or summer's heat,
Sickness, or thirst, and hunger, all the train
Of nature's clamorous appetites, asserting
An equal right in kings and common men,
Reprove me daily?—No—If I boast of aught,
Be it, to have been Heaven's happy instrument,
The means of good to all my fellow-creatures:
This is a king's best praise.

Enter Omar.

Om. Honour and fame [*Bowing to Tamerlane.*
For ever wait the emperor! May our prophet
Give him ten thousand thousand days of life,
And every day like this! The captive sultan,
Fierce in his bonds, and at his fate repining,
Attends your sacred will.

Tam. Let him approach.

*Enter Bajazet and other Turkish prisoners in chains, with a
guard of soldiers.*

When I survey the ruins of this field,
The wild destruction which thy fierce ambition
Has dealt among mankind, (so many widows
And helpless orphans has thy battle made,
That half our eastern world this day are mourners)
Well may I, in behalf of heav'n and earth,
Demand from thee atonement for this wrong,

Baj. Make thy demand to those that own thy pow'r,
Know I am still beyond it; and tho' Fortune
(Curse on that changeling deity of fools!)
Has stript me of the train and pomp of greatness,
That outside of a king, yet still my soul,
Fix'd high, and of itself alone dependent,
Is ever free and royal, and ev'n now,
As at the head of battle, does defy thee.

I know

I know what pow'r the chance of war has giv'n,
 And dare thee to the use on't. This vile speeching,
 'This after-game of words, is what most irks me;
 Spare that, and for the rest 'tis equal all——
 Be it as it may:

Tam. Well was it for the world,
 When on their borders neighbouring princes met,
 Frequent in friendly parle, by cool debates
 Preventing wasteful war; such should our meeting
 Have been, hadst thou but held in just regard
 The sanctity of leagues so often sworn to.
 Canst thou believe thy prophet, or, what's more,
 That pow'r supreme which made thee and thy prophet,
 Will, with impunity, let pass that breach
 Of sacred faith giv'n to the royal Greek?

Baj. Thou pedant talker! ha! art thou a king,
 Possess'd of sacred pow'r, Heav'n's darling attribute,
 And dost thou prate of leagues, and oaths, and prophets?
 I hate the Greek (perdition on his name!)
 As I do thee, and would have met you both
 As death does human nature, for destruction.

Tam. Causeless to hate is not of human kind:
 The savage brute that haunts in woods remote
 And desert wilds, tears not the fearful traveler,
 If hunger, or some injury, provoke not.

Baj. Can a king want a cause, when empire bids
 Go on? What is he born for, but ambition?
 It is his hunger, 'tis his call of nature,
 The noble appetite which will be satisfy'd,
 And, like the food of Gods, make him immortal.

Tam. Henceforth I will not wonder we were foes,
 Since souls that differ so by nature hate,
 And strong antipathy forbids their union.

Baj. The noble fire that warms me, does indeed
 Transcend thy coldness. I am pleas'd we differ,
 Nor think alike.

Tam. No—for I think like Man,
 Thou like a monster, from whose baleful presence
 Nature starts back; and tho' she fix'd her stamp
 On thy rough mass, and mark'd thee for a man,
 Now, conscious of her error, she disclaims thee,
 As form'd for her destruction.——

'Tis true, I am a king, as thou hast been:

Honour and glory too have been my aim ;
 But tho' I dare face death, and all the dangers
 Which furious war wears in its bloody front,
 Yet would I chuse to fix my name by peace,
 By justice, and by mercy ; and to raise
 My trophies on the blessings of mankind :
 Nor would I buy the empire of the world
 With ruin of the people whom I sway,
 On-forfeit of my honour.

Baj. Prophet, I thank thee——
 Damnation !—Couldst thou rob me of my glory,
 To dress up this tame king, this preaching dervise ?
 Unfit for war, thou shouldst have liv'd secure
 In lazy peace, and with debating senates
 Shar'd a precarious sceptre, sat tame'y still,
 And let bold factions canton out thy pow'r,
 And wrangle for the spoils they robb'd thee of ;
 Whilst I (curse on the power that stops my ardour !)
 Would, like a tempest, rush amidst the nations,
 Be greatly terrible, and deal, like Alha,
 My angry thunder on the frightened world.

Tam. The world !—'twould be too little for thy pride :
 Thou wouldst scale heav'n——

Baj. I would.—Away ! my soul
 Disdains thy conference.

Tam. Thou vain, rash thing,
 That, with gigantic insolence, hast dar'd
 To lift th' wretched self above the stars,
 And mate with pow'r almighty : thou art fall'n !

Baj. 'Tis false ! I am not fall'n from aught I have
 been ;
 At least my soul resolves to keep her state,
 And scorns to take acquaintance with ill fortune.

Tam. Almost beneath my pity art thou fall'n ;
 Since, while th' avenging hand of Heav'n is on thee,
 And presses to the dust thy swelling soul,
 Fool-hardy, with the stronger thou contendest.
 To what vast heights had thy tumultuous temper
 Been hurry'd, if success had crown'd thy wishes !
 Say, what had I to expect, if thou hadst conquer'd ?

Baj. Oh, glorious thought ! by Heav'n I will enjoy it,
 Tho' but in fancy : imagination shall
 Make room to entertain the vast idea.

Oh! had I been the master but of yesterday,
 The world, the world had set me; and for thee,
 I had us'd thee as thou art to me—a dog,
 The object of my scorn, and mortal hatred:
 I would have taught thy neck to know my weight,
 And mounted from that footstool to my saddle:
 Then, when thy daily servile task was done,
 I would have cag'd thee for the scorn of slaves,
 'Till thou hadst begg'd to die; and ev'n that mercy
 I had deny'd thee. Now thou know'st my mind,
 And question me no farther.

Tam. Well dost thou teach me
 What justice should exact from thee. Mankind,
 With one consent, cry out for vengeance on thee;
 Loudly they call to cut off this league-breaker,
 This wild destroyer from the face of earth.

Baj. Do it, and rid thy shaking soul at once
 Of its worst fear.

Tam. Why slept the thunder
 That should have arm'd the idol deity,
 And giv'n thee pow'r, ere yester sun was set,
 To shake the soul of Tamerlane. Hadst thou an arm
 To make thee fear'd, thou shouldst have prov'd it on me,
 Amidst the sweat and blood of yonder field,
 When thro' the tumult of the war I fought thee,
 Fenc'd in with nations.

Baj. Curse upon the stars,
 That fated us to different scenes of slaughter!
 Oh! could my sword have met thee——

Tam. Thou hadst then,
 As now, been in my pow'r, and held thy life
 Dependent on my gift—Yes, Bajazet,
 I bid thee live—' so much my soul disdains
 ' That thou shouldst think I can fear aught but Heav'n:
 Nay more; couldst thou forget thy brutal fierceness,
 And form thyself to manhood, I would bid thee
 Live, and be still a king, that thou may'st learn
 What man should be to man, in war remembering
 The common tie and brotherhood of kind.
 This royal tent, with such of thy domestics
 As can be found, shall wait upon thy service;
 Nor will I use my fortune to demand

Hard terms of peace, but such as thou may'st offer
With honour, I with honour may receive.

[*Tamerlane signs to an officer, who unbinds Bajazet.*]

Baj. Ha! say'st thou—no—our prophet's vengeance
blast me,

If thou shalt buy my friendship with thy empire.
Damnation on thee! thou smooth fawning talker!
Give me again my chains, that I may curse thee,
And gratify my rage: or, if thou wilt
Be a vain fool, and play with thy perdition,
Remember I'am thy foe, and hate thee deadly.
Thy folly on thy head!

Tam. Be still my foe.

Great minds, like Heav'n, are pleas'd in doing good,
'Tho' the ungrateful subjects of their favours
Are barren in return. 'Thy stubborn pride,
' That spurns the gentle office of humanity,
' Shall in my honour own, and thy despite,
' I have done as I ought.' Virtue still does
With scorn the mercenary world regard,
Where abject souls do good, and hope reward:
Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise,
But with herself, herself the goddess pays. }

[*Exit Tamerlane, Axalla, Prince of Tanais, Mirvan, Lama, and attendants.*]

Baj. Come, lead me to my dungeon; plunge me
down

Deep from the hated sight of man and day;
Where, under covert of the friendly darkness,
My soul may brood, at leisure, o'er its anguish.

Om. Our royal master wou'd with noble usage,
Make your misfortunes light: he bids you hope——

Baj. I tell thee, slave, I have shook hands with hope,
And all my thoughts are rage, despair, and horror.
Ha! wherefore am I thus!—Perdition seize me!
But my cold blood runs shiv'ring to my heart,
At some phantom, that in dead of night,
With dreadful action, stalks around our beds.
The rage and fiercer passions of my breast
Are lost in new confusion.——

Enter Haly.

Arpasia!——*Baj.*!

Ha.

Ha. Oh, emperor! for whose hard fate our prophet
And all the heroes of thy sacred race
Are sad in Paradise, thy faithful Haly,
'The slave of all thy pleasures, in this ruin,
This universal shipwreck of thy fortunes,

Enter Arpasia.

Has gather'd up this treasure for thy arms :
Nor ev'n the victor, haughty Tamerlane,
(By whose command once more thy slave beholds thee)
Denies this blessing to thee, but with honour
Renders thee back thy queen, thy beauteous bride.

Baj. Oh! had her eyes with pity seen my sorrows,
Had she the fondness of a tender bride,
Heav'n cou'd not have bestow'd a greater blessing,
And love had made amends for loss of empire.
But see, what fury dwells upon her charms!
What lightning flashes from her angry eyes!
With a malignant joy she views my ruin :
Even beauteous in her hatred, still she charms me,
And awes my fierce tumultuous soul to love.

Arp. And dar'st thou hope, thou tyrant ravisher!
That heav'n has any joy in store for thee?
Look back upon the sum of thy past life,
Where tyranny, oppression, and injustice,
Perjury, murders, swell the black account;
Where lost Arpasia's wrongs stand bleeding fresh,
Thy last recorded crime. But Heav'n has found thee;
At length the tardy vengeance has o'erta'en thee.
My weary soul shall bear a little longer
The pain of life, to call for justice on thee:
That once complete, sink to the peaceful grave,
And lose the memory of my wrongs and thee.

Baj. Thou rail'st! I thank thee for it—Be perverse,
And muster all the woman in thy soul;
Goad me with curses, be a very wife,
That I may fling off this tame love, and hate thee.

Enter Monefes.

[*Bajazet starting.*]

Ha! Keep thy temper, heart; nor take alarm
At a slave's presence.

Mon. It is Arpasia!—Leave me, thou cold fear.
Sweet as the rosy morn she breaks upon me;
And sorrow, like the night's unwholesome shade,
Gives way before the golden dawn she brings.

Baj. [*Advancing towards him.*] Ha, Christian! Is it well that we meet thus?

Is this thy faith?

Mon. Why does thy frowning brow
Put on this storm of fury? Is it strange
We should meet here, companions in misfortune,
The captives of one common chance of war?
Nor shouldst thou wonder that my sword has fail'd
Before the fortune of victorious Tamerlane,
When thou, with nations like the sandèd shore,
With half the warring world upon thy side,
Couldst not stand up against this dreadful battle,
'That crush'd thee with its shock. Thy men can witness,
'Those cowards that forsook me in the combat,
My sword was not inactive.

Baj. No——'Tis false:

Where is my daughter, thou vile Greek? Thou hast
Betray'd her to the Tartar; or even worse,
Pale with thy fear, didst lose her like a coward;
And, like a coward now, wouldst cast the blame
On fortune and ill stars.

Mon. Ha! saidst thou, like a coward?
What sanctity, what majesty divine
Hast thou put on, to guard thee from my rage,
That thus thou dar'st to wrong me?

Baj. Ours, thou slave,
And know me for thy lord——

Mon. I tell thee, tyrant,
When in the pride of power thou sat'st on high,
When like an idol thou wert vainly worship'd
By prostrate wretches, born with slavish souls;
Ev'n when thou wert a king, thou wert no more
Nor greater than Monefes, born of a race
Royal and great as thine. What art thou now then?
The fate of war has set thee with the lowest;
And captives (like the subjects of the grave)
Losing distinction, serve one common lord.

Baj. Pray'd by this dog! Now give a loose to rage,
And curse thyself; curse thy false cheating prophet.
Ha! yet there's some revenge. Hear me, thou Christian!
'Thou lest'st that sister with me: Thou impostor!
'Thou boaster of thy honesty! Thou liar!
But take her to thee back.

Now to explore my prison——if it holds
 Another plague like this. The restless damn'd
 (If musties lie not) wander thus in hell;
 From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run,
 Then from their frosts to fires return again,
 And only prove variety of pain.

[*Exeunt Bajazet, Haly, Omar, and guards.*]

Arp. Stay, Bajazet. I charge thee, by my wrongs,
 Stay and unfold a tale of so much horror,
 As only fits thy telling.——Oh, Moneses!

‘*Mon.* Why dost thou weep? Why this tempestuous
 passion,

‘That stops thy fault’ring tongue short on my name?

‘Oh, speak! unvail this mystery of sorrow,

‘And draw the dismal scene at once to light.

‘*Arp.* Thou art undone, lost, ruin’d, and undone!

‘*Mon.* I will not think ’tis so, while I have thee;

‘While thus ’tis given to fold thee in my arms;

‘For while I sigh upon thy panting bosom,

‘The sad remembrance of past woes is lost

‘*Arp.* Forbear to sooth thy soul with flatt’ring thoughts

‘Of evils overpast, and joys to come:

‘Our woes are like the genuine shade beneath,

‘Where fate cuts off the very hopes of day,

‘And everlasting night and horror reign.’

Mon. By all the tenderness and chaste endearments
 Of our past love, I charge thee, my Arpasia,
 To ease my soul of doubts! Give me to know,
 At once, the utmost malice of my fate!

Arp. Take then thy wretched share in all I suffer,
 Still partner of my heart! Scarce hadst thou left
 The sultan’s camp, when the imperious tyrant,
 Soft’ning the pride and fierceness of his temper,
 With gentle speech made offer of his love.

Amaz’d, as at the shock of sudden death,

I started into tears, and often urg’d

(Tho’ still in vain) the difference of our faiths.

At last, as flying to the utmost refuge,

With lifted hands and streaming eyes, I own’d

The fraud, which when we first were made his pris’ners,

‘Conscious of my unhappy form, and fearing

‘For thy dear life,’ I forc’d thee to put on;

Thy borrow’d name of brother, mine of sister;

Hiding between that veil the nearer tie
 Our mutual vows had made before the priest.
 Kindling to rage at hearing of my story,
 'Then, be it so, he cry'd : 'Think'st thou thy vows,
 Giv'n to a slave, shal' bar me from thy beauties ?
 'Then bade the priest pronounce the marriage rites :
 Which he perform'd ; whilst, shrieking with despair,
 I call'd in vain the Pow'rs of heav'n to aid me.

Mon. Villain ! Imperial villain !—Oh, the coward !
 As'd by his guilt, tho' back'd by force and power,
 He durst not, to my face, avow his purpose :
 But, in my absence, like a lurking thief,
 Sole on my treasure, and at once undid me.

Arp. Had they not kept me from the means of death,
 Forgetting all the rules of Christian suffering,
 I had done a desp'rate murder on my soul,
 Ere the rude slaves, that waited on his will,
 Had forc'd me to his——

Mon. Stop thee there, Aspasia,
 And bar my fancy from the guilty scene !
 Let not thought enter, lest the busy mind
 Should muster such a train of monstrous images
 As would distract me. Oh ! I cannot bear it.
 Thon lovely hoard of sweets, where all my joys
 Were treasur'd up, to have thee rifled thus !
 ' Thus torn untasted from my eager wishes !'
 But I will have thee from him. Tamerlane
 (The sovereign judge of equity on earth)
 Shall do me justice on this mighty robber,
 And render back thy beauties to Monefes.

Arp. And who shall render back my peace, my honour,
 The spotless whiteness of my virgin soul ?
 Ah ! no, Monefes—'Think not I will ever
 Bring a polluted love to thy chaste arms :
 I am the tyrant's wife. Oh, fatal title !
 And, in the sight of all the saints, have sworn,
 By honour, womanhood, and blushing shame,
 To know no second bride-bed but my grave.

' *Mon.* I swear it must not be, since still my eye
 ' Finds thee as heav'nly white, as angel pure,
 ' As in the earliest hours of life thou wert :
 ' Nor art thou his, but mine ; thy first vow's mine,
 ' Thy soul is mine.——

' *Arp.*

' *Arp.* Oh! think not, that the pow'r
 ' Of most persuasive eloquence can make me
 ' Forget I've been another's, been his wife.
 ' Now, by my blushes, by the strong confusion
 ' And anguish of my heart, spare me, Monefes,
 ' Nor urge my trembling virtue to the precipice.
 Shortly, Oh! very shortly, if my sorrows
 Divine aright, and Heav'n be gracious to me,
 Death shall dissolve the fatal obligation,
 ' And give me up to peace, to that blest place
 ' Where the good rest from care and anxious life.

' *Mon.* Oh, teach me, thou fair saint, like thee to
 ' Teach me, with hardy piety, to combat [suffer!
 ' The present ills: instruct my eyes to pass
 ' The narrow bounds of life, this land of sorrow,
 ' And, with bold hopes, to view the realms beyond,
 ' Those distant beauties of the future state.
 ' Tell me, Arpalia—say, what joys are those
 ' That wait to crown the wretch who suffers here?
 ' Oh! tell me, and sustain my failing faith.

' *Arp.* Imagine somewhat exquisitely fine,
 ' Which fancy cannot paint, which the pleas'd mind
 ' Can barely know, unable to describe it;
 ' Imagine 'tis a tract of endless joys
 ' Without satiety or interruption;
 ' Imagine, 'tis to meet and part no more.

' *Mon.* Grant, gentle Heav'n, that such may be our
 ' Let us be blest together.—Oh, my soul! [lot!
 ' Build on that hope, and let it arm thy courage
 ' To struggle with the storm that parts us now.

' *Arp.* Yes, my Monefes! now the surges rise,
 The swelling sea breaks in between our barks,
 And drives us to our fate on different rocks.
 Farewell!—My soul lives with thee.——

Mon. Death is parting,
 'Tis the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body.
 But this is somewhat worse—My joy, my comfort,
 All that was left in life, fleets after thee;
 ' My aching sight hangs on thy parting beauties,
 ' Thy lovely eyes, all drown'd in floods of sorrow.
 ' So sinks the setting sun beneath the waves,
 ' And leaves the traveller in pathless woods,
 ' Benighted and forlorn. —Thus, with sad eyes,

‘ Westward he turns, to mark the light’s decay,
 ‘ Till, having lost the last faint glimpse of day,
 ‘ Cheerless, in darkness, he pursues his way.’ }

[*Exit Monefes and Arpasia severally.*]

A C T III. SCENE, *the inside of the royal tent.*

Enter Axalla, Selima, and women attendants.

‘ *Ax.* C A N there be aught in love, beyond this
 proof,

‘ This word’rous proof, I give thee of my faith?
 ‘ To tear thee from my bleeding bosom thus!
 ‘ To rend the strings of life, to set thee free,
 ‘ And yield thee to a cruel father’s power,
 ‘ Foe to my hopes! what canst thou pay me back?
 ‘ What but thyself, thou angel! for this fondness?

‘ *Sel.* Thou dost upbraid me, beggar as I am,
 ‘ And urge me with my poverty of love.

‘ Perhaps thou think’st, ’tis nothing for a maid
 ‘ To struggle through the niceness of her sex,
 ‘ The blushes and the fears, and own she loves:
 ‘ Thou think’st ’tis nothing for my artless heart
 ‘ To own my weakness, and confess thy triumph.

‘ *Ax.* Oh! yes I own it; my charm’d ears ne’er knew
 ‘ A sound of so much rapture, so much joy.

‘ Not voices, instruments, not warbling birds,
 ‘ Not winds, not murm’ring waters join’d in concert,
 ‘ Not tuneful nature, not th’ according spheres,
 ‘ Utter such harmony, as when my Selima,
 ‘ With down-cast looks and blushes, said—I love.—

‘ *Sel.* And yet thou say’st, I am a niggard to thee.
 ‘ I swear the balance shall be held between us,
 ‘ And Love be judge, if after all the tenderness,
 ‘ Tears and confusion of my virgin-soul,

‘ Thou shouldst complain of aught, unjust Axalla!’
 ‘ *Ax.* Why was I ever blest!—Why is remembrance

Rich with a thousand pleasing images
 Of past enjoyments, since ’tis but to plague me?
 When thou art mine no more, what will it ease me
 To think of all the golden minutes past,
 To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy,
 But, like an angel fall’n from bliss, to curse

My present state, and mourn the heav'n I've lost?

Sel. Hope better for us both; nor let thy fears,
Like an unlucky omen, cross my way.

' My father, rough and stormy in his nature,
' To me was always gentle, and, with fondness
' Paternal, ever met me with a blessing.
' Oft, when offence had stirr'd him to such fury,
' That not grave counsellors for wisdom fam'd,
' Nor hardy captains that had fought his battles,
' Presum'd to speak, but struck with awful dread
' Were hush'd as death; yet has he smil'd on me,
' Kiss'd me, and bade me utter all my purpose,
' Till with my idle prattle I had sooth'd him,
' And won him from his anger.

' *Ax.* Oh! I know
' Thou hast a tongue to charm the wildest tempers.
' Herds would forget to graze, and savage beasts
' Stand still and lose their fierceness, but to hear thee,
' As if they had reflection, and by reason
' Forsook a less enjoyment for a greater.
' But, Oh! when I revolve each circumstance,
' My Christian faith, my service closely bound
' To Tamerlane, my master and my friend,
' Tell me, my charmer, if my fears are vain?
' Think what remains for me, if the fierce sultan
' Should doom thy beauties to another's bed!

Sel. 'Tis a sad thought; but to appease thy doubts,
Here, in the awful sight of Heav'n, I vow
No pow'r shall e'er divide me from thy love,
Ev'n duty shall not force me to be false.

My cruel stars may tear thee from my arms,
But never from my heart; ' and when the maids
' Shall yearly come with garlands of fresh flow'rs,
' To mourn with pious office o'er my grave,
' They shall sit sadly down, and weeping tell
' How well I lov'd, how much I suffer'd for thee;
' And, while they grieve my fate, shall praise my con-
' stancy.'

Ax. But see, the sultan comes!—' My beating heart
' Bounds with exulting motion; hope and fear
' Fight with alternate conquest in my breast.
' Oh! can I give her from me? Yield her up?

‘ Now mourn, thou God of Love, since Honour triumphs,
 ‘ And crowns his cruel altars with thy spoils.’

Enter Bajazet.

Baj. To have a nauseous courtesy forc’d on me,
 Spite of my will, by an insulting foe!
 Ha! they would break the fierceness of my temper,
 And make me supple for their slavish purpose.
 Curse on their fawning arts! ‘ From Heav’n itself
 ‘ I would not, on such terms, receive a benefit,
 ‘ But spurn it back upon the giver’s hand.’

Sel. My lord! my royal father! } *Sel. comes forward,*

Baj. Ha! what art thou? } *and kneels to Baj.*

What heavenly innocence! that in a form
 So known, so lov’d, hast left thy paradise,
 For joyless prison, for this place of woe!
 Art thou my Selima?

Sel. Have you forgot me?

Alas, my piety is then in vain!

Your Selima, your daughter whom you lov’d,
 The fondling once of her dear father’s arms,
 Is come to claim her share in his misfortunes;
 ‘ To wait and tend him with obsequious duty;
 ‘ To sit and weep for every care he feels;
 To help to wear the tedious minutes out,
 To soften bondage, and the loss of empire.

Baj. Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind
 Could know a thought of peace, it would be now:
 Ev’n from thy prating infancy thou wert
 My joy, my little angel: smiling comfort
 Came with thee still to glad me. Now I’m curs’d
 Ev’n in thee too. Reproach and infamy
 Attend the Christian dog t’ whom thou wert trusted.
 To see thee here—’twere better see thee dead!

Ax. Thus Tamerlane, to royal Bajazet,
 With kingly greeting, sends: since with the brave
 (The bloody business of the fight once ended)
 Stern hate and opposition ought to cease;
 Thy queen already to thy arms restor’d,
 Receive this second gift, thy beauteous daughter;
 And if there be aught farther in thy wish,
 Demand with honour, and obtain it freely.

Baj. Bear back the fulsome greeting to thy master;
 Tell him, I’ll none on’t. Had he been a God,

All

All his omnipotence could not restore
 My fame diminish'd, loss of sacred honour,
 The radiancy of majesty eclips'd:
 For aught besides, it is not worth my care;
 The giver and his gifts are both beneath me.

Ax. Enough of war the wounded earth has known;
 ' Weary at length, and wasted with destruction,
 ' Sadly she rears her ruin'd head, to shew
 ' Her cities humbled, and her countries spoil'd,
 ' And to her mighty masters sues for peace.'
 Oh, sultan! by the pow'r divine I swear,
 With joy I would resign the savage trophies
 In blood and battle gain'd, could I atone
 The fatal breach 'twixt thee and Tamerlane;
 And think a soldier's glory well bestow'd
 To buy mankind a peace.

Baj. And what art thou,
 That dost presume to mediate 'twixt the rage
 Of angry kings?

Ax. A prince, born of the noblest,
 And of a soul that answers to that birth,
 That dares not but do well. Thou dost put on
 A forc'd forgetfulness, thus not to know me,
 A guest so lately to thy court, then meeting
 On gentler terms.—

Sel. Could aught efface the merit
 Of brave Axalla's name, yet when your daughter
 Shall tell how well, how nobly she was us'd,
 How light this gallant prince made all her bondage,
 Most sure the royal Bajazet will own
 That honour stands indebted to such goodness,
 Nor can a monarch's friendship more than pay it.

Baj. Ha! know'st thou that, fond girl?—Go—'tis
 not well;

And when thou could'st descend to take a benefit
 From a vile Christian, and thy father's foe,
 Thou didst an act dishonest to thy race:
 Henceforth, unless thou mean'st to cancel all
 My share in thee, and write thyself a bastard,
 Die, starve, know any evil, any pain,
 Rather than taste a mercy from these dogs.

Sel. Alas, Axalla!

Ax. Weep not, lovely maid!

I swear,

I swear, ' one pearly drop from those fair eyes
' Would over-pay the service of my life !

One sigh from thee has made a large amends
For all thy angry father's frowns and fierceness.

Baj. Oh, my curs'd fortune !—Am I fall'n thus low ?
Dishonour'd to my face ! Thou earth-born thing !
Thou clod ! how hast thou dar'd to lift thy eyes
Up to the sacred race of mighty Ottoman,
Whom kings, whom e'en our prophet's holy offspring,
At distance have beheld ? And what art thou ?
What glorious titles blazon out thy birth ?
Thou vile obscurity ! ha !—say—thou base one.

Ax. Thus challeng'd, Virtue, modest as she is,
Stands up to do herself a common justice ;
'To answer, and assert that in-born merit,
That worth, which conscious to herself she feels.
Were honour to be scann'd by long descent
From ancestors illustrious, I could vaunt
A lineage of the greatest, and recount
Among my fathers names of antient story,
Heroes and god-like patriots, who subdu'd
The world by arms and virtue, and, being Romans,
Scorn'd to be kings ; but that be their own praise :
Nor will I borrow merit from the dead,
Myself an undeserver. I could prove
My friendship such as thou might'st deign t' accept
With honour, when it comes with friendly office,
To render back thy crown and former greatness ;
' And yet e'en this, e'en all is poor, when Selima,
' With matchless worth, weighs down the adverse scale.'

Baj. To give me back what yesterday took from me,
Would be to give like Heaven, when, having finish'd
This world (the goodly work of his creation),
He bid his favourite man be lord of all.
But this——

Ax. Nor is this gift beyond my pow'r.
Oft has the mighty master of my arms
Urg'd me, with large ambition, to demand
Crowns and dominions from his bounteous pow'r :
'Tis true, I wav'd the proffer, and have held it
The worthier choice to wait upon his virtues,
To be the friend and partner of his wars,
'Than to be Asia's lord. Nor wonder then,

If in the confidence of such a friendship,
I promise boldly, for the royal giver,
Thy crown and empire.

Baj. For our daughter thus
Mean'st thou to barter? Ha! I tell thee, Christian,
There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.

Ax. Oh! name the mighty ransom; task my pow'r;
Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
T' enhance the price.

Baj. I take thee at thy word.
Bring me the Tartar's head.

Ax. Ha!

Baj. Tamerlane's!
That death, that deadly poison to my glory.

Ax. Prodigious! Horrid!

Sel. Lost! for ever lost!

Baj. And could'st thou hope to bribe me with aught else?
With a vile peace patch'd up on slavish terms?
With tributary kingship? — No! — To merit
A recompence from me, sate my revenge.
The Tartar is my bane, I cannot bear him:
One heav'n and earth can never hold us both;
Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly
Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:
As if two suns should meet in the meridian,
And strive in fiery combat for the passage.
Weep'st thou, fond girl? Now, as thy king and father,
I charge thee, drive this slave from thy remembrance!
Hate shall be pious in thee. * Come and join
To curse thy father's foes. * [*Laying bold on her hand.*

Sel. Undone for ever!

' Now, tyrant duty, art thou yet obeyed?

' There is no more to give thee. Oh, Axalla!

Bajazet leads out Selima, she looking back on Axalla.

' *Ax.* 'Tis what I fear'd; fool that I was t' obey!

' The coward Love, that could not bear her frown,

' Has wrought his own undoing. Perhaps e'en now

' The tyrant's rage prevails upon her fears:

' Fiercely he storms; she weeps, and sighs, and trembles,

' But swears at length to think on me no more.

' He bade me take her.—But, Oh, gracious honour!

' Upon what terms? My soul yet shudders at it,

' And

' And stands but half recover'd of her fright.
 ' The head of Tamerlane ! monstrous impiety !
 ' Bleed, bleed to death, my heart, be virtue's martyr.
 ' Oh, emperor ! I own, I ought to give thee
 ' Some nobler mark, than dying, of my faith.
 ' Then let the pains I feel my friendship prove,
 ' 'Tis easier far to die, than cease to love.' [*Exit Axalla.*

S C E N E, Tamerlane's camp.

' *Enter severally Monefes, and Prince of Tanais.*

' *Mon.* If I not press untimely on his leisure,
 ' You would much bind a stranger to your service,
 ' To give me means of audience from the emperor.

' *Pr.* Most willingly ; tho' for the present moment
 ' We must intreat your stay ; he holds him private.

' *Mon.* His council, I presume ?

' *Pr.* No, the affair
 ' Is not of earth, but Heav'n—A holy man,
 ' (One whom our prophet's law calls such) a dervise,
 ' Keeps him in conference.

' *Mon.* Hours of religion,
 ' Especially of princes, claim a reverence,
 ' Nor will be interrupted.

' *Pr.* What his bus'ness
 ' Imports we know not ; but with earnest suit,
 ' This morn, he begg'd admittance. Our great master
 ' (Than whom none bows more lowly to high Heav'n)
 ' In reverend regard holds all that bear
 ' Relation to religion, and, on notice
 ' Of his request, receiv'd him on the instant.

' *Mon.* We will attend his pleasure. [*Exeunt.*']

Enter Tamerlane and a Dervise.

Tam. Thou bring'st me thy credentials from the Highest,
 From Alha and our Prophet. Speak thy message,
 It must import the best and noblest ends.

Der. Thus speaks our holy Mahomet, who has giv'n
 To reign and conquer : Ill dost thou repay [thee
 The bounties of his hand, unmindful of
 The fountain whence thy streams of greatness flow.
 Thou hast forgot high Heav'n, hast beaten down
 And trampled on religion's sanctity.

Tam.

Tam. Now, as I'm a soldier and a king,
 (The greatest names of honour) do but make
 Thy imputation out, and Tamerlane
 Shall do thee ample justice on himself.
 So much the sacred name of Heaven awes me,
 Could I suspect my soul of harbouring aught
 To its dishonour, I would search it strictly,
 And drive th' offending thought with fury forth.

Der. Yes, thou hast hurt our holy prophet's honour,
 By fostering the pernicious Christian sect;
 Those, whom his sword pursu'd with fell destruction,
 Thou tak'st into thy bosom, to thy councils;
 They are thy only friends. The true believers
 Mourn to behold thee favour this Axala.

Tam. I fear me, thou out-go'st the prophet's order,
 And bring'st his venerable name to shelter
 A rudeness ill-becoming thee to use,
 Or me to suffer. When thou nam'st my friend,
 Thou nam'st a man beyond a monk's discerning,
 Virtuous and great, a warrior and a prince.

Der. He is a Christian; there our law condemns him,
 Altho' he were ev'n all thou speak'st, and more.

Tam. 'Tis false; no law divine condemns the virtuous,
 For differing from the rules your schools devise.
 Look round, how Providence bestows alike
 Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year,
 On different nations, all of different faiths;
 And (tho' by several names and titles worship'd)
 Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise;
 Since all agree to own, at least to mean,
 One best, one greatest, only Lord of all:

' Thus when he view'd the many forms of nature,
 ' He found that all was good, and best the fair variety.'

Der. Most impious and profane!—Nay, frown not,
 Full of the prophet, I despise the danger [prince;
 Thy angry power may threaten. I command thee
 To hear and to obey; since thus says Mahomet:
 Why have I made thee dreadful to the nations?
 Why have I giv'n thee conquest; but to spread
 My sacred law ev'n to the utmost earth,
 And make my holy Mecca the world's worship?
 Go on, and wheresoe'er thy arms shall prosper,
 Plant there the prophet's name; with sword and fire

Drive

Drive out all other faiths, and let the world
Confess him only.

Tam. Had he but commanded
My sword to conquer all, to make the world
Know but one lord, the task were not so hard;
'Twere but to do what has been done already;
And Philip's son, and Caesar did as much;
But to subdue th' unconquerable mind,
To make one reason have the same effect
Upon all apprehensions; to force this
Or this man just to think as thou and I do;
Impossible! unless souls were alike
In all, which differ now like human faces.

Der. Well might the holy cause be carried on,
If Musselmén did not make war on Musselmén.
Why hold'st thou captive a believing monarch?
Now, as thou hop'st to 'scape the prophet's curse,
Release the royal Bajazet, and join,
With force united, to destroy the Christians.

Tam. 'Tis well — I've found the cause that mov'd thy
What shallow politician set thee on, [zeal.
In hopes to fright me this way to compliance?

Der. Our prophet only——

Tam. No—thou dost belie him,
Thou maker of new faiths! that dar'st to build
Thy fond inventions on religion's name.
Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
Divinely pure, and simple from all arts;
You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
The harlot of your fancies; and by adding
False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,
And wo not bear all lights. Hence! I have found thee.

Der. I have but one resort. Now aid me, prophet! [*Aside.*
Yet I have somewhat further to unfold;
Our prophet speaks to thee in thunder—* thus——

[* *The Derwîsh draws a conceal'd dagger, and offers to
slab Tamerlane.*

Tam. No, villain, Heav'n is watchful o'er its wor-
shippers, [Wrestling the dagger from him.
And blasts the murderer's purpose. Think, thou wretch!
Think on the pains that wait thy crime, and tremble
When I shall doom thee——

Der.

Der. 'Tis but death at last;
And I will suffer greatly for the cause
That urg'd me first to the bold deed.

Tam. Oh, impious!
Enthusiasm thus makes villains martyrs.
[*Pausing.*] It shall be so—Io die! 'twere a reward—
Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and mine:
Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat;
Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe;
If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,
And am, in that, rewarded for my mercy;
If thou continu'st still to be the same,
'Tis punishment enough to be a villain.
Hence! from my sight—It shocks my soul to think
That there is such a monster in my kind. [*Exit Dervise.*
Whither will man's impiety extend?
Oh, gracious Heav'n! dost thou withhold thy thunder,
When bold assassins take thy name upon 'em,
And swear they are the champions of thy cause?

Enter Monefes.

Mon. Oh, Emperor! before whose awful throne
Th' afflicted never kneel in vain for justice, { *Kneeling*
Undone, and ruin'd, blasted in my hopes, { *to Tam.*
Here let me fall before your sacred feet,
And groan out my misfortunes, till your pity,
(The last support and refuge that is left me)
Shall raise me from the ground, and bid me live.

Tam. Rise, prince; nor let me reckon up thy worth,
And tell how boldly that might bid thee ask,
Lest I should make a merit of my justice,
The common debt I owe to thee, to all,
Ev'n to the meanest of mankind, the charter
By which I claim my crown, and Heav'n's protection.
Speak, then, as to a king, the sacred name
Where pow'r is lodg'd, for righteous ends alone.

Mon. One only joy, one blessing, my fond heart
Had fix'd its wishes on, and that is lost;
That sister, for whose safety my sad soul
Endur'd a thousand fears——

Tam. I well remember,
When, ere the battle join'd, I saw thee first,
With grief uncommon to a brother's love,

Thou

'Thou told'st a moving tale of her misfortunes,
Such as bespeak my pity. Is there aught
'Thou canst demand from friendship? Ask, and have it.

Mon. First, Oh! let me intreat your royal goodness:
Forgive the folly of a lover's caution,
'That forg'd a tale of folly to deceive you.
Said I, she was my sister?—Oh! 'tis false;
She holds a dearer interest in my soul,

' Such as the closest ties of blood ne'er knew;
' An interest, such as power, wealth, and honour,
' Can't buy, but love, love only, can bestow;
She was the mistress of my vows, my bride,
By contract mine, and long ere this the priest
Had ty'd the knot for ever, had not Bajazet——

Tam. Ha! Bajazet!—If yet his pow'r withholds
The cause of all thy sorrows, all thy fears,
E'en gratitude for once shall gain upon him,
Spite of his savage temper, to restore her.
'This morn a soldier brought a captive beauty,
Sad tho' she seem'd, yet of a form more rare,
By much the nobler spoil of all the field;
E'en Scipio, or a victor yet most cold,
Might have forgot his virtue at her sight.
Struck with a pleasing wonder, I beheld her,
Till, by a slave that waited near her person,
I learn'd she was the captive sultan's wife:
Strait I forbade my eyes the dangerous joy
Of gazing long, and sent her to her lord.

Mon. There was Monefes lost. Too sure my heart
(From the first mention of her wond'rous charms)
Presag'd it could be only my Arpasia.

Tam. Arpasia! did'st thou say?

Mon. Yes, my Arpasia.

Tam. Sure I mistake, or I fain would mistake thee;
I nam'd the queen of Bajazet; his wife.

Mon. His queen! his wife! He brings that holy title
To varnish o'er the monstrous wrongs he has done me.

Tam. Alas! I fear me, prince, thy griefs are just;
Thou art indeed, unhappy——

Mon. Can you pity me,
And not redress? *Oh, royal Tamerlane! [**Kneeling.*
Thou succour of the wretched, reach thy mercy
To save me from the grave, and from oblivion;

Be gracious to the hopes that wait my youth.
 ' Oh ! let not sorrow blast me, lest I wither,
 ' And fall in vile dishonour.' Let thy justice
 Restore me my Arpasia ; give her back,
 Back to my wishes, to my transports give her,
 To my fond, restless, bleeding, dying bosom.
 Oh ! give her to me yet, while I have life
 To bleis thee for the bounty. Oh, Arpasia !

Tam. Unhappy, royal youth, why dost thou ask
 What honour must deny ? Ha ! is she not
 His wife, whom he has wedded, whom enjoy'd ?
 And would'st thou have my partial friendship break
 That holy knot, which ty'd once, all mankind
 Agree to hold sacred and undissolvable ?
 The brutal violence would stain my justice,
 And brand me with a tyrant's hated name
 To late posterity.

Mon. Are then the vows,
 The holy vows we register'd in Heav'n,
 But common air ?

Tam. Could thy fond love forget
 The violation of a first enjoyment ? ———
 But sorrow has disturb'd and hurt thy mind.

Mon. Perhaps it has, and like an idle madman,
 That wanders with a train of hooting boys,
 I do a thousand things to shame my reason.
 Then let me fly, and bear my follies with me,
 Far, far from the world's sight. Honour and fame,
 Arms and the glorious war shall be forgotten ;
 No noble sound of greatness, or ambition,
 Shall weak my drowsy soul from her dead sleep,
 Till the last trump do summon.

Tam. Let thy virtue
 Stand up and answer to these warring passions,
 That vex thy manly temper. From the moment
 When first I saw thee, something wond'rous roble
 Shone thro' thy form, and won my friendship for thee,
 Without the tedious form of long acquaintance ;
 Nor will I lose thee poorly for a woman.
 Come, droop no more, thou shalt with me pursue
 True greatness, till we rise to immortality.
 Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Monestes ;
 Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world'.

Mon. ' So the good Genius warns his mortal charge
 ' To fly the evil fate that still pursues him,
 ' Till it have wrought his ruin.' Sacred Tamerlane,
 Thy words are as the breath of angels to me.
 But, oh! too deep the wounding grief is fix'd,
 For any hand to heal.

Tam. This dull despair,
 Is the soul's laziness. Rouse to the combat,
 And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore thee;
 The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
 And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul,
 ' Begun by sloth. and nurs'd by too much ease.
 ' The idle God of Love supinely dreams,
 ' Amidst inglorious shades and purling streams.
 ' In rosy fetters and fantastic chains,
 ' He binds deluded maids and simple swains;
 ' With soft enjoyments woos them to forget
 ' The hardy toils and labours of the great.
 ' But if the warlike trumpet's loud alarms
 ' To virtuous acts excite, and manly arms,
 ' The coward boy avows his abject fear,
 ' On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
 ' Scar'd at the noble noise and thunder of the war.

* " *The boy, fond Love,
 " Is nurs'd and bred in sloth, and too much ease;
 " Near purling streams, in gloomy shades, he lies,
 " And loosely there, instructs his votaries,
 " Honour and active virtue to despise;
 " But if the trumpets echo from afar,
 " On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
 " Scar'd at the noise and clangor of the war."*

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV. SCENE, Bajazet's tent.

Enter Haly and the Dervise.

Haly. **T**O 'scape with life from an attempt like this,
 Demands my wonder justly.

Der. True, it may;
 But 'tis a principle of his new faith;
 'Tis what his Christian favourites have inspir'd.

* The lines in italics are now spoken at the Theatre, instead of those between single commas.

Who

Who fondly make a merit of forgiveness,
 And give their foes a second opportunity,
 If the first blow should miss.—Failing to serve
 The sultan to my wish, and e'en despairing
 Of further means t' effect his liberty,
 A lucky accident retriev'd my hopes.

Ha. The prophet and our master will reward
 Thy zeal in their behalf; but speak thy purpose.

Der. Just ent'ring here I met the Tartar general,
 Fierce Omar.

Ha. He commands, if I mistake not,
 This quarter of the army, and our guards.

Der. The same. By his stern aspect, and the fires
 That kindled in his eyes, I guess'd the tumult
 Some wrong had rais'd in his tempestuous soul;
 A friendship of old date had giv'n me privilege
 To ask of his concerns. In short, I learn'd,
 That burning for the sultan's beauteous daughter,
 He had begg'd her, as a captive of the war,
 From Tamerlane; but meeting with denial
 Of what he thought his services might claim,
 Loudly he storms, and curses the Italian,
 As cause of this affront. I join'd his rage,
 And added to his injuries the wrongs
 Our prophet daily meets with from Axalla.
 But see, he comes. Improve what I shall tell,
 And all we wish is ours. *[They seem to talk together aside.]*

Enter Omar.

Om. No——if I forgive it,
 Dishonour blast my name! Was it for this
 That I directed his first steps to greatness,
 Taught him to climb, and made him what he is?
 ' When our great Cam first bent his eyes towards him;
 ' (Then petty prince of Parthia) and by me
 ' Persuaded, rais'd him to his daughter's bed,
 ' Call'd him his son, and successor of empire;
 Was it for this, that like a rock I stood
 And stemm'd a torrent of our Tartar lords,
 Who scorn'd his upstart sway? When Calibes,
 In bold rebellion, drew e'en half the provinces
 To his own cause, I, like his better angel,
 Stood by his shaking throne, and fix'd it fast;
 And am I now so lost to his remembrance,

That,

That, when I ask a captive, he shall tell me,
She is Axalla's right, his Christian minion?

Der. Allow me, valiant Omar, to demand,
Since injur'd thus, why right you not yourself?
The prize you ask is in your power.

Om. It is,
And I will seize it, in despite of Tamerlane
And that Italian dog.

Ha. What need of force,
When every thing concurs to meet your wishes?
Our mighty master would not wish a son
Nobler than Omar. From a father's hand
Receive that daughter, which ungrateful Tamerlane
Has to your worth deny'd.

Om. Now by my arms,
It will be great revenge. What will your sultan
Give to the man that shall restore his liberty,
His crown, and give him pow'r to wreak his hatred
Upon his greatest foe?

Ha. All he can ask,
And far beyond his wish—— [Trumpets.

Om. These trumpets speak
The emperor's approach; he comes once more
To offer terms of peace. Retire within.
I will no farther—he grows deadly to me;
And curse me, prophet, if I not repay
His hate, with retribution full as mortal. [Exeunt.

SCENE draws, and discovers Arpasia lying on a couch.

S O N G.

To thee, Oh, gentle sleep, alone
Is owing all our peace;
By thee our joys are heighten'd shown,
By thee our sorrows cease.
The nymph, whose hand, by fraud or force,
Some tyrant has possess'd,
By thee, obtaining a divorce,
In her own choice is bless'd.
Oh, stay! Arpasia bids thee stay;
The sadly weeping fair
Conjures thee, not to lose in day
The object of her care.

To

To grasp whose pleasing form she sought,
 That motion chas'd her sleep;
 Thus by ourselves are oft'nest wrought
 The griefs for which we weep.

Arp. Oh, death! thou gentle end of human sorrows,
 Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake,
 In tedious expectation of thy peace?
 Why stand thy thousand thousand doors still open,
 To take the wretched in, if stern religion
 Guards every passage, and forbids my entrance?—
 Lucrece could bleed, and Portia swallow fire,
 When urg'd with griefs beyond a mortal sufferance;
 But here it must not be. Think then, Arpasia,
 Think on the sacred dictates of thy faith,
 And let that arm thy virtue, to perform
 What Cato's daughter durst not—Live, Arpasia,
 And dare to be unhappy.

Enter Tamerlane.

Tam. When fortune smiles upon the soldier's arms,
 And adds e'en beauty to adorn his conquest,
 Yet she ordains, the fair should know no fears,
 ' No sorrows to pollute their lovely eyes,
 ' But should be us'd e'en nobly, as herself,
 ' The queen and goddess of the warrior's vows.'
 Such welcome as a camp can give, fair Sultaneſs,
 We hope you have receiv'd; it shall be larger,
 And better as it may.

Arp. Since I have borne
 That miserable mark of fatal greatness,
 I have forgot all difference of conditions;
 Scepters and fetters are grown equal to me,
 And the best change my fate can bring is death.

Tam. ' When sorrow dwells in such an angel form,
 ' Well may we guess that those above are mourners;
 ' Virtue is wrong'd, and bleeding innocence
 ' Suffers some wond'rous violation here,
 ' To make the saints look sad.' Oh! teach my power
 To cure those ills which you unjustly suffer,
 Lest Heav'n should wrest it from my idle hand,
 If I look on, and see you weep in vain.

Arp. Not that my soul disdains the generous aid
 Thy royal goodness proffers; but, Oh, emperor!

It is not in my fate to be made happy ;
 Nor will I listen to the coz'ner, no,
 But stand resolv'd to bear the beating storm
 That roars around me ; safe in this alone,
 That I am not immortal.— I ho' 'tis hard,
 'Tis wond'rous hard, when I remember thee
 (Dear native Greece !), and you, ye weeping maids,
 That were companions of my virgin youth !
 My noble parents ! Oh, the grief of heart,
 The pangs, that, for unhappy me, bring down
 Their reverend ages to the grave with sorrow !
 And yet there is a woe surpassing all :
 Ye saints and angels, give me of your constancy,
 If you expect I shall endure it long

Tam. Why is my pity all that I can give
 To tears like yours ? And yet I fear 'tis all ;
 Nor dare I ask what mighty loss you mourn,
 Lest honour should forbid to give it back.

Arp. No, Tamierlane, nor did I mean thou should'st.
 But know (tho' to the weakness of my sex
 I yield these tears) my soul is more than man.
 Think, I am born a Greek, nor doubt my virtue ;
 ' A Greek ! from whose fam'd ancestors of old
 ' Rome drew the patterns of her boasted heroes.'
 They must be mighty evils that can vanquish
 A Spartan courage, and a Christian faith.

Enter Bajazet.

Baj. To know no thought of rest ! to have the mind
 Still ministering fresh plagues, as in a circle,
 Where one dishonour treads upon another ;
 What know the fiends beyond it ?—Ha ! by hell,

[*Seeing Arp. and Tam.*

There wanted only this to make me mad.
 Comes he to triumph here ? to rob me of my love,
 And violate the last retreat of happiness ?

Tam. But that I read upon thy frowning brow,
 That war yet lives, and rages in thy breast ;
 Once more (in pity to the suffering world)
 I meant to offer peace.——

Baj. And mean'st thou too
 To treat it with our empires ; and to barter
 The spoils which fortune gave thee for her favours ?

Arp. What would the tyrant ?

[*Aside.*
Baj.

Baj. Seek'st thou thus our friendship?
Is this the royal usage thou didst boast?

Tam. The boiling passion that disturbs thy soul
Spreads clouds around, and makes thy purpose dark—
Unriddle what thy mystic fury aims at.

Baj. Is it a riddle? Read it there explain'd;
There, in my shame. Now judge me thou, Oh, Prophet,
And equal Heav'n, if this demand not rage!
The peasant-hind, begot and born to slavery,
Yet dares assert a husband's sacred right,
And guards his homely couch from violation:
And shall a monarch tamely bear the wrong
Without complaining?

Tam. If I could have wrong'd thee,
If conscious virtue, and all-judging Heav'n,
Stood not between, to bar ungovern'd appetite,
What hinder'd, but, in spite of thee my captive,
I might have us'd a victor's boundless power,
And sated every wish my soul could form?
But, to secure thy fears, know, Bajazet,
This is among the things I dare not do. [sent?

Baj. By hell, 'tis false! else wherefore art thou pre-
What can'st thou for, but to undo my honour?
I found thee holding amorous parley with her,
Gazing and glotting on her wanton eyes,
And bargaining for pleasures yet to come:
My life, I know, is the devoted price——
But take it, I am weary of the pain.

Tam. Yet, ere thou rashly urge my rage too far,
I warn thee to take heed: I am a man,
And have the frailties common to man's nature;
The fiery seeds of wrath are in my temper,
And may be blown up to-so fierce a blaze
As wisdom cannot rule. Know, thou hast touch'd me
E'en in the nicest, tend'rest part, my honour;
My honour! which, like pow'r, disdains being question'd;
Thy breath has blasted my fair virtue's fame,
And mark'd me for a villain, and a tyrant.

Ap. And stand I here an idle looker-on,
To see my innocence murder'd and mangled
By barbarous hands, nor can revenge the wrong?
Art thou a man, and dar'st thou use me thus? [To Baj.
Hast thou not torn me from my native country,

From the dear arms of my lamenting friends,
 From my soul's peace, and from my injur'd love?
 Hast thou not ruin'd, blotted me for ever,
 And driv'n me to the brink of black despair?
 And is it in thy malice yet to add
 A wound more deep, to sully my white name,
 My virtue?——

Baj. Yes, thou hast thy sex's virtues,
 Their affectation, pride, ill-nature, noise,
 Proneness to change, e'en from the joy that pleas'd 'em :
 So gracious is your idol, dear variety,
 That for another love you would forego
 An angel's form, to mingle with a devil's.

‘ Thro’ ev’ry state and rank of men you wander,
 ‘ Till e’en your large experience takes in all
 ‘ The different nations of the peopled earth.’ [tribe

Arp. Why sought'st thou not from thy own impious

A wife like one of these? ‘ For such thy race

‘ (If human nature brings forth such) affords.

‘ Greece, for chaste virgins fam'd, and pious matrons,

‘ Teems not with monsters like your Turkish wives,

‘ Whom guardian eunuchs, haggard and deform'd,

‘ Whom walls and bars make honest by constraint.’

Know, I detest, like hell, the crime thou mention'st :

Not that I fear or reverence thee, thou tyrant ;

But that my soul, conscious of whence it sprung,

Sits unpolluted in its sacred temple,

And scorns to mingle with a thought so mean.

Tam. Oh, pity ! that a greatness so divine

Should meet a fate so wretched, so unequal.——

Though blind and wilful to the good that courts thee,

[To Bajazet,

With open-handed bounty Heav'n pursues thee,

And bids thee (undeserving as thou art,

And monstrous in thy crimes) be happy yet ;

Whilst thou, in fury, dost avert the blessing,

And art an evil Genius to thyself.

Baj. No—Thou, thou art my greatest curse on earth !

Thou, who hast robb'd me of my crown and glory,

And now pursu'st me to the verge of life,

To spoil me of my honour : Thou ! thou hypocrite !

That wear'st a pageant outside shew of virtue,

To

To cover the hot thoughts that glow within!
Thou rank adulterer!

Tam. Oh, that thou wert
The lord of all those thousands that lie breathless
On yonder field of blood, that I again
Might hunt the face of death and danger,
'Thro' the tumultuous battle, and there force thee,
Vanquish'd and sinking underneath my arm,
'To own thou hast traduc'd me like a villain.

Baj. Ha! does it gall thee, Tartar? By Revenge
It joys me much to find thou feel'st my fury.
Yes, I will echo to thee, thou adulterer!
'Thou dost profane the name of king and soldier,
And, like a ruffian bravo, cam'st with force
'To violate the holy marriage-bed.

Tam. Wert thou not shelter'd by thy abject state,
The captive of my sword, by my just anger,
My breath, like thunder, should confound thy pride,
And doom thee dead this instant with a word. [not.]

Baj. 'Tis false! my fate's above thee, and thou dar'st

Tam. Ha! dare not! Thou hast rais'd my pond'rous
And now it falls to crush thee at a blow. [rage,
A guard there!—* Seize and drag him to his fate!

[* *Enter a guard, they seize Bajazet.*

'Tyrant, I'll do a double justice on thee;
At once revenge myself, and all mankind.

Baj. Well dost thou, ere thy violence and lust
Invade my bed, thus to begin with murder:
Drown all thy fears in blood, and sin securely.

Tam. Away!

Arp. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, stay! I charge thee by renown;
By that bright glory thy great soul pursues,
Call back the doom of death!

Tam. Fair injur'd excellence,
Why dost thou kneel, and waste such precious pray'rs,
'As might e'en bribe the saints to partial justice,'
For one to goodness lost, who first undid thee,
Who still pursues, and aggravates the wrong?

Baj. By Alha! no—I will not wear a life
Bought with such vile dishonour.—Death shall free me
At once from infamy, and thee, thou traitress!

Arp. No matter, tho' the whistling winds grow loud,
And the rude tempest roars, 'tis idle rage:

Oh! mark it not; but let thy steady virtue
Be constant to its temper. Save his life,
And save Arpasia from the sport of talkers.
Think how the busy, meddling world will toss
Thy mighty name about, in scurril mirth;
Shall brand thy vengeance, as a foul design,
And make such monstrous legends of our lives,
As late posterity shall blush in reading.

Tam. Oh, matchless virtue! Yes, I will obey;
Tho' laggard in the race, admiring yet,
I will pursue the shining path thou tread'st.
Sultan, be safe! Reason resumes her empire,

[*The guards release Bajazet.*]

And I am cool again.—Here break we off,
Lest farther speech should minister new rage.
Whely from dangerous passions I retreat,
To keep a conquest which was hard to get:
And, Oh! 'tis time I should for flight prepare,
A war more fatal seems to threaten there,
And all my rebel-blood assists the fair:
One moment more, and I too late shall find,
That Love's the strongest power that lords it o'er the
mind. [*Exit Tamerlane, followed by the guards.*]

Baj. To what new shame, what plague am I reserv'd?

' Why did my stars refuse me to die warm,
' While yet my regal state stood unimpach'd,
' Nor knew the curse of having one above me?
' Then too (altho' by force I grasp'd the joy)
' My love was safe, nor felt the rack of doubt.'
Why hast thou forc'd this nauseous life upon me?

Is it to triumph o'er me?—But I will,

I will be free; I will forget thee all;

The bitter and the sweet, the joy and pain,
Death shall expunge at once, and ease my soul.

Prophet, take notice, I disclaim thy paradise,

Thy fragrant bow'rs, and everlasting shades;

Thou hast plac'd woman there, and all thy joys are
tainted. [*Exit Bajazet.*]

Arp. A little longer yet, be strong, my heart;

A little longer let the busy spirits

Keep on their chearful round.—It wo't not be!

' Love, sorrow, and the sting of vile reproach,

' Succeeding one another in their course,

' Like

' Like drops of eating water on the marble,
 ' At length have worn my boasted courage down :
 ' I will indulge the woman in my soul,
 ' And give a loose to tears and to impatience.'
 Death is at last my due, and I will have it.—
 And see, the poor Monefes comes, to take
 One sad adieu, and then we part for ever.

Enter Monefes.

Mon. Already am I onward of my way ;
 Thy tuneful voice comes like a hollow sound
 At distance, to my ears. My eyes grow heavy,
 And all the glorious lights of heav'n look dim ;
 'Tis the last office they shall ever do me,
 To view thee once, and then to close and die.

Arp. Alas, how happy have we been, Monefes !
 Ye gentle days, that once were ours, what joys
 Did every chearful morning bring along !
 No fears, no jealousies, no angry parents,
 That for unequal births, or fortunes, frown'd ;
 But Love, that kindly join'd our hearts, to bless us,
 Made us a blessing too to all besides.

M. Oh, cast not thy remembrance back, Arpasia !
 'Tis grief unutterable ; 'tis distraction !
 ' But let this last of hours be peaceful sorrow !'
 Here let me kneel, and pay my latest vows.
 Be witness, all ye saints, thou Heav'n and Nature,
 Be witness of my truth, for you have known it !
 Be witness that I never knew a pleasure,
 In all the world could offer like Arpasia !
 Be witness, that I liv'd but in Arpasia !
 And, Oh, be witness, that her loss has kill'd me !

Arp. While thou art speaking, life begins to fail,
 And ev'ry tender accent chills like death.
 Oh ! let me haste then, yet, ere day declines,
 And the long night prevail, once more to tell thee
 What, and how dear, Monefes has been to me.
 What has he not been ?—All the names of love,
 Brothers, or fathers, husbands, all are poor :
 Monefes is myself ; in my fond heart,
 E'en in my vital blood, he lives and reigns ;
 The last dear object of my parting soul
 Will be Monefes ; the last breath that lingers
 Within my panting breast, shall sigh, Monefes.

Moz. It is enough! Now to thy rest, my soul,
The world and thou have made an end at once.

Ap. Fain wou'd I still detain thee, hold thee still :
Nor honour can forbid, that we together
Should share the poor few minutes that remain :
I swear, methinks this sad society
Has somewhat pleasing in it.—Death's dark shades
Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror ;
At near approach the monsters, form'd by fear,
Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear :
Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,
With flow'rs adorn'd, and never-fading green,
Inviting stands, to take the wretched in ;
No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair,
Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,
But injur'd lovers find Elysium there. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Bajazet, Omar, Haly, and the Dervise.

Baj. Now, by the glorious tomb that shrines our Pro-
By Mecca's sacred temple, here I swear, [*phet,*
Our daughter is thy bride! and to that gift
Such wealth, such pow'r, such honours will I add,
That monarchs shall with envy view thy state,
And own thou art a demi-god to them.
'Thou hast given me what I wish'd, pow'r of revenge,
And when a king rewards, 'tis ample retribution.

Omr. Twelve Tartar lords, each potent in his tribe,
Have sworn to own my cause, and draw their thousands,
To-morrow, from th' ungrateful Parthian's side.
The day declining seems to yield to night,
Ere little more than half her course be ended.
In an auspicious hour prepare for flight ;
'The leaders of the troops thro' which we pass,
Rais'd by my pow'r, devoted to my service,
Shall make our passage secret and secure.

Der. Already, mighty Sultan, art thou safe,
Since, by yon passing torches' light I guess,
'To his pavilion Tamerlane retires,
Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
All who remain within these tents are thine,
And hail thee as their lord.——
Ha! the Italian prince,
With sad Monceses, are not yet gone forth.

Baj. Ha ! with our queen and daughter !

Om. They are ours :

I mark'd the slaves who waited on Axalla ;
They, when the emperor past out, prest on,
And mingled with the crowd, nor miss'd their lord :
He is your pris'ner, sir : I go this moment,
To seize, and bring him to receive his doom.

[*Exit Omar.*

Baj. Haste, Haly, follow, and secure the Greek :
Him too I wish to keep within my power. [*Exit Haly.*

Der. If my dread lord permit his slave to speak,
I would advise to spare Axalla's life,
'Till we are safe beyond the Parthian's power :
Him, as our pledge of safety, may we hold ;
And, could you gain him to assist your flight,
It might import you much.

Baj. Thou counsell'st well ;
And tho' I hate him (for he is a Christian,
And to my mortal enemy devoted),
Yet, to secure my liberty and vengeance,
I wish he now were ours.

Der. ———And see ! they come !
Fortune repents ; again she courts your side,
And, with this first fair offering of success,
She woos you to forget her crime of yesterday.

Enter Omar with Axalla prisoner, Selima following weeping.

Ax. I wo' not call thee villain ; 'tis a name
Too holy for thy crime. To break thy faith,
And turn a rebel to so good a master,
Is an ingratitude unmatched on earth.
The first revolting angel's pride could only
Do more than thou hast done. Thou copie'st well,
And keep'st the black original in view.

Om. Do rage, and vainly call upon thy master
To save his minion. My revenge has caught thee,
And I will make thee curse that fond presumption
That set thee on to rival me in aught.

Baj. Christian, I hold thy fate at my disposal !
One only way remains to mercy open ;
Be partner of my flight, and my revenge,
And thou art safe. The other choice is death,

Om. What means the Sultan ?

Der. I conjure you, hold——

Your rival is devoted to destruction: [*Aside to Omar.*

Nor would the Sultan now defer his fate,

But for our common safety.—Listen further. [*Whispers.*

Ax. Then briefly thus. Death is the choice I make;

Since, next to Heav'n, my master and my friend

Has interest in my life, and still shall claim it.

Baj. Then take thy wish—Call in our mutes!

Sel. My father,

If yet you have not sworn to cast me off,

And turn me out, to wander in misfortune;

If yet my voice be gracious in your ears;

If yet my duty and my love offend not;

Oh, call your sentence back, and save Axalla.

Baj. Rise, Selima! The slave deserves to die,

Who durst, with sullen pride, refuse my mercy:

Yet, for thy sake, once more I offer life.

Sel. Some angel whisper to my anxious soul,

What shall I do to save him.—‘Oh, Axalla!

‘Is it so easy to thee, to forsake me?

‘Canst thou resolve, with all this cold indifference,

‘Never to see me more? To leave me here

‘The miserable mourner of thy fate,

‘Condemn’d to waste my widow’d virgin youth,

‘My tedious days and nights, in lonely weeping,

‘And never know the voice of Comfort more?

‘*Ax.* Search not too deep the sorrows of my breast:

‘Thou say’st, I am indifferent and cold:

‘Oh! is it possible my eyes should tell

‘So little of the fighting storm within?

‘Oh, turn thee from me; save me from thy beauties;

‘Falseness and ruin all look lovely there.

‘Oh! let my lab’ring soul yet struggle thro’——

‘I will—I would resolve to die, and leave thee.

‘*Baj.* Then let him die!—He trifles with my favour.

‘I have too long attended his resolves.

‘*Sel.* Oh! stay a minute, yet a minute longer; [*To Baj.*

‘A minute is a little space in life.

‘There is a kind consenting in his eyes,

‘And I shall win him to your royal will.’

Oh, my Axalla! seem but to consent—‘*To Axalla aside.*

Unkind and cruel, will you then do nothing?

I find I am not worth thy least of cares.

Ax. Oh! labour not to hang dishonour on me!
 I could bear sickness, pain, and poverty,
 'Those mortal evils, worse than death, for thee.
 But this—It has the force of Fate against us,
 And cannot be.

Sel. See, see. Sir! he relents; [To Bajazet.
 Already he inclines to own your cause.
 A little longer, and he is all yours.

Baj. Then mark. how far a father's fondness yields.
 'Till midnight I defer the death he merits,
 And give him up, 'till then, to thy persuasion.
 If by that time he meets my will, he lives;
 If not, thyself shall own he dies with justice.

Ax. 'Tis but to lengthen life upon the rack.
 I am resolv'd already.

Sel. Oh! be still,
 Nor rashly urge a ruin on us both;
 'Tis but a moment more I have to save thee.
 Be kind. auspicious Alha. to my pray'r;
 More for my love, than for myself, I fear;
 Neglect mankind a while, and make him all thy care!

[*Exeunt Axalla and Selima.*

Baj. Monefes—is that dog secur'd?

Om. He is.

Baj. 'Tis well—My soul perceives returning greatness,
 As nature feels the spring. Lightly she bounds,
 And shakes dishonour, like a burthen, from her,
 Once more imperial, awful, and herself.
 So, when of old, love from the Titans fled,
 Ammon's rude front his radiant face bely'd,
 And all the majesty of Heav'n lay hid.
 At length, by fate, to pow'r divine restor'd,
 His thunder taught the world to know its lord!
 The God grew terrible again, and was again ador'd

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE Bajazet's tent.

Arp. SURE 'tis a horror more than darkness brings,
 That sits upon the night! Fate is abroad;
 Some ruling fiend hangs in the dusky air,
 And scatters ruin, death, and wild distraction,
 O'er all the wretched race of man below.
 Not long ago, a troop of ghastly slaves
 Rush'd in, and forc'd Monefes from my sight;
 Death hung so heavy on his drooping spirits,
 That scarcely could he say—Farewel—for ever!
 And yet, methinks, some gentle spirit whispers,
 Thy peace draws near, Arpasia, sigh no more!
 And see, the king of terrors is at hand;
 His minister appears.

Enter Bajazet and Haly.

Baj. [*Aside to Haly.*] The rest I leave
 To thy dispatch. For, Oh! my faithful Haly,
 Another care has taken up thy master.
 Spite of the high-wrought tempest in my soul,
 Spite of the pangs which jealousy has cost me,
 'This haughty woman reigns within my breast:
 ' In vain I strive to put her from my thoughts,
 ' To drive her out, with empire and revenge.
 ' Still she comes back, like a retiring tide,
 ' That ebbs a while, but strait returns again,
 ' And swells above the beach.'

Ha. Why wears my lord
 An anxious thought for what his pow'r commands?
 When, in an happy hour, you shall, ere long,
 Have borne the empress from amidst your foes,
 She must be yours, be only and all yours.

Baj. On that depends my fear. Yes, I must have her;
 I own, I will not, cannot go without her.
 ' But such is the condition of our flight,
 ' That, should she not consent, 'twould hazard all
 ' To bear her hence by force. Thus I resolve then,
 ' By threats and pray'rs, by every way, to move her;
 ' If all prevail not, force is left at last;
 ' And I will set life, empire, on the venture,
 ' To keep her mine—Be near to wait my will.

[*Exit Haly.*
 When

When last we parted, 'twas on angry terms ;
 Let the remembrance die, or kindly think
 That jealous rage is but a hasty flame,
 That blazes out, when love too fiercely burns.

Arp. For thee to wrong me, and for me to suffer,
 Is the hard lesson that my soul has learnt,
 And now I stand prepar'd for all to come :
 Nor is it worth my leisure to distinguish
 If love or jealousy commit the violence :
 Each have alike been fatal to my peace,
 Confirming me a wretch, and thee a tyrant.

Baj. Still to deform thy gentle brow with frowns,
 And still to be perverse, it is a manner
 Abhorrent from the softness of thy sex :
 Women, like summer storms, a while are cloudy,
 Burst out in thunder, and impetuous show'rs ;
 But strait the sun of beauty dawns abroad,
 And all the fair horizon is serene.

Arp. Then, to retrieve the honour of my sex,
 Here I disclaim that changing and inconstancy :
 To thee I will be ever as I am.

Baj. Thou say'st I am a tyrant ; think so still,
 And let it warn thy prudence to lay hold
 On the good hour of peace, that courts thee now.
 Souls form'd like mine brook being scorn'd but ill.
 Be well advis'd, and profit by my patience ;
 It is a short-liv'd virtue.

Arp. Turn thy eyes
 Back on the story of my woes, Barbarian !
 Thou that hast violated all respects
 Due to my sex and honour of my birth !
 Thou brutal ravisher, ' that hast undone me,
 ' Ruin'd my love !' Can I have peace with thee ?
 Impossible ! First heav'n and hell shall join ;
 They only differ more.

Baj. I see, 'tis vain
 To court thy stubborn temper with endearments.
 Resolve, this moment, to return my love,
 And be the willing partner of my flight,
 Or, by the Prophet's holy law, thou diest.

Arp. And dost thou hope to fright me with the phantom
 Death ? 'Tis the greatest mercy thou canst give ;
 So frequent are the murders of thy reign,

One day scarce passing by unmark'd with blood,
 That children, by long use, have learnt to scorn it.
 Know, I did in to aid thy treach'rous purpose,
 And, should'st thou dare to force me, with my cries
 I will call Heav'n and Earth to my assistance.

Haj. Confusion! dost thou brave me? But my wrath
 Shall find a passage to thy swelling heart,
 And rack thee worse than all the pains of death.
 That Grecian dog, the minion of thy wishes,
 Shall be dragg'd forth, and butcher'd in thy sight;
 Thou shalt behold him when his pangs are terrible,
 Then, when he stares and gasps, and struggles strongly,
 'E'en in the bitterest agony of dying,'
 'Till thou shalt rend thy hair, tear out thy eyes,
 And curse thy pride, while I applaud my vengeance.

Ap. Oh, fatal image! all my pow'rs give way,
 And resolution sickens at the thought;
 'A flood of passion rises in my breast,
 'And labours fiercely upward to my eyes.'
 Come, all ye great examples of my sex,
 Chaste virgins, tender wives, and pious matrons;
 'Ye holy martyrs, who, with wond'rous faith
 'And constancy unshaken, have sustain'd
 'The rage of cruel men, and fiery persecution;
 Come to my aid, and teach me to defy
 The malice of this fiend! I feel, I feel
 Your sacred spirit arm me to resistance.
 Yes, tyrant, I will stand this shock of fate;
 Will live to triumph o'er thee, for a moment,
 Then die well pleas'd, and follow my Monetes.

Haj. Thou talk'st it well. But talking is thy privilege;
 'Tis all the boasted courage of thy sex;
 Tho', for thy soul, thou dar'st not meet the danger.

Ap. By all my hopes of happiness I dare!—
 'My soul is come within her ken of heav'n;
 'Char'd with the joys and beauties of that place,
 'Her thoughts and all her cares she fixes there,
 'And 'tis in vain for thee to rage below.
 'Thus stars flame bright, and keep their place above,
 'Tho' rustling winds reform this lower world.'

Bj. The moment is the trial.

Ap. I come!

This moment then shall shew I am a Greek,

And

And speak my country's courage in my suffering.

Baj. Here, Mercy, I disclaim thee! Mark me, traitor!
My love prepares a victim to thy pride, [trefs!
And when it greets thee next, 'twill be in blood.

[*Ex Baj.*

Arp. My heart beats higher, and my nimble spirits
Ride swiftly thro' their purple channel's round.

' 'Tis the last blaze of life. Nature revives,
' Like a dim winking lamp, that flashes brightly
' With parting light, and straight is dark for ever.'

And see, my last of sorrows is at hand;
Death and Monefes come together to me;
As if my stars, that had so long been cruel,
Grew kind at last, and gave me all I wish.

Enter Monefes, guarded by some mutes; others attending with a cup of poison, and a bow-string.

Mon. I charge ye, O ye ministers of fate!
Be swift to execute your master's will;
Bear me to my Arpasia; let me tell her,
The tyrant is grown kind. He bids me go,
And die beneath her feet. 'A joy shoots thro'
' My drooping breast; as often when the trumpet
' Has call'd my youthful ardour forth to battle,
' High in my hopes, and ravish'd with the sound,
' I have rush'd eager on amidst the foremost,
' To purchase victory, or glorious death.'

Arp. If it be happiness, alas! to die,
To lie forgotten in the silent grave,
To love and glory lost, and from among
The great Creator's works expung'd and blotted;
Then, very shortly, shall we both be happy:

Mon. There is no room for doubt; 'tis certain bliss.
The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
Already seem more light; nor has my soul
One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
To make me dread the justice of hereafter:
But, standing now on the last verge of life,
Boldly I view the vast abyss eternity,
Eager to plunge, and leave my woes behind me.

Arp. By all the truth of our past loves, I vow,
To die appears a very nothing to me.

' But, Oh, Monefes! should I not allow
' Somewhat to love, and to my sex's tenderness?'

This

This very now I could put off my being
Without a groan ; but to behold thee die !——
Nature shrinks in me at the dreadful thought,
Nor can my constancy sustain this blow.

Mon. Since thou art arm'd for all things after death,
Why should the pomp and preparation of it
Be frightful to thy eyes ? There's not a pain,
Which age or sickness brings, the least disorder
That vexes any part of this fine frame,
But's full as grievous. All that the mind feels
Is much, much more.—And ice, I go to prove it.

*Enter a mute; he signs to the rest, who proffer a
bow-string to Monefes.*

Arp. Think, ere we part !

Mon. Of what ?

Arp. Of something soft,
Tender and kind, of something wond'rous sad.
Oh, my full soul !

Mon. My tongue is at a loss ;
'Thoughts crowd so fast, thy name is all I've left,
My kindest, truest, dearest, best Arpasia !

[The mutes struggle with him.]

Arp. I have a thousand thousand things to utter,
A thousand more to hear yet. Barbarous villains !
Give me a minute. Speak to me, Monefes !

Mon. Speak to thee ? 'Tis the business of my life,
'Tis all the use I have for vital air.

Stand off, ye slaves ! To tell thee that my heart
Is full of thee ; that even, at this dread moment,
My fond eyes gaze with joy and rapture on thee ;
Angels, and light itself, are not so fair——

Enter Bajazet, Haly, and attendants.

Baj. Ha ! wherefore lives this dog ? Be quick, ye
And rid me of the pain. [slaves !]

Mon. For only death,
And the last night can shut out my Arpasia.

[The mutes strangle Monefes.]

Arp. Oh, dismal ! 'tis not to be borne ! Ye moralists !
Ye talkers ! what are all your precepts now ?
Patience ! Distraction ! Blast the tyrant, blast him,
Avenging lightnings ! Snatch him hence, ye fiends !
Love ! Death ! Monefes ! ' Nature can no more ;
' Ruin is on her, and she sinks at once. [She sinks down.]
Baj.

- Baj.* Help, Haly, raise her up, and bear her out.
Ha. Alas! she faints.
Arp. No, tyrant, 'tis in vain.
 Oh! I am now beyond thy cruel pow'r;
 The peaceful slumber of the grave is on me:
 E'en all the tedious day of life I've wander'd,
 Bewilder'd with misfortunes:
 At length 'tis night, and I have reach'd my home,
 Fortgetting all the toils and troubles past,
 Weary I'll lay me down and sleep, till——Oh!

[*She dies.*]

Baj. Fly, ye slaves,
 And fetch me cordials. No, she shall not die!
 Spite of her swollen pride, I'll hold-in life,
 And force her to be blest against her will.

Ha. Already 'tis beyond the power of art;
 For see, a deadly cold has froze the blood,
 The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
 And all the animating fire is quench'd:
 E'en beauty too is dead; an ashy pale
 Grows o'er the roses; the red lips have lost
 Their fragrant hue, for want of that sweet breath
 That blest 'em with its odours as it past.

Baj. Can it be possible? Can rage and grief,
 Can love and indignation be so fierce,
 So mortal in a woman's heart? Confusion!
 Is she escap'd then? What is royalty,
 If those that are my slaves, and should live for me,
 Can die, and bid defiance to my power?

Enter the Dervise.

Der. The valiant Omar sends to tell thy greatness
 The hour of flight is come, and urges haste;
 Since he descries, near Tamerlane's pavilion,
 Bright troops of crowding torches, who from thence,
 On either hand, stretch far into the night,
 And seem to form a shining front of battle.
 Behold, e'en from this place thou may'st discern them.

[*Looking out.*]

Baj. By Alha, yes! they cast a day around 'em,
 And the plain seems thick set with stars, as heav'n.
 Ha! or my eyes are false, they move this way;
 'Tis certain so. Fly, Haly, to our daughter.

[Exit Haly.
 Let

Let some secure the Christian prince Axalla :
We will begone this minute.

Enter Omar.

Om. Lost ! undone !

Baj. What mean'st thou ?

Om. All our hopes of flight are lost.

Mirvan and Zama, with the Parthian horse,
Enclose us round, they hold us in a toil.

Baj. Ha ! whence this unexpected curse of chance ?

Om. Too late I learnt, that early in the night
A slave was suffer'd, by the princess' order,
To pass the guard. I clove the villain down
Who yielded to his flight ; but that's poor vengeance.
That fugitive has rais'd the camp upon us,
And unperceiv'd, by favour of the night,
In silence they have march'd to intercept us.

Baj. My daughter ! Oh, the traitors !

Der. Yet, we have

Axalla in our power ; and angry Tamerlane
Will buy his fav'rite's life on any terms.

Om. With those few friends I have I for a while
Can face their force : if they refuse us peace,
Revenge shall sweeten ruin, and 'twill joy me,
' To drag my fee down with me in my fall.' [*Exit Om.*

Enter Haly, with Selima - up ne.

Baj. See where she comes with well-dissimbl'd inno-
With truth and faith so lovely in her face, [cease ;
As if she durst e'en disavow the falsehood.——
Hop'st thou to make amends with triling tears,
For my lost crown, and disappointed vengeance ?
Ungrateful Seim ! thy father's curse !
Bring forth the minion of her foolish heart ;
He dies this moment.——

Ha. Would I could not speak
The crime of fatal love ! The slave who fled,
By whom we are undone, was that Axalla.

Baj. Ha ! say'st thou ?

Ha. Hid beneath that vile appearance,
The princess found a means for his escape.

Sel. I am undone ! e'en nature has disclaim'd me !
My father ! have I lost you all ? My father !

Baj. Talk'st thou of nature, who hast broke her bands !
Thou art my bane, thou witch, thou infant parricide !

But

TAMERLANE.



Barralet del. viv del.

Walker sculp.

MR. PALMER as B. ALAZET and

MISS HOPKINS as SELIMA.

Raj. You, now thou Traitor! Act 5.

Published Decr 1771 by D. Colman & Partners

But I will study to be strangely cruel;
 I will forget the folly of my fondness;
 Drive all the father from my breast; now snatch thee,
 Tear thee to pieces, drink thy treacherous blood,
 And make thee answer all my great revenge!

Now, now, thou traitress! *[Offers to kill her.]*

Sel. Plunge the poignard deep! *[She embraces him.]*

The life my father gave shall hear his summons,
 And issue at the wound——‘Start not to feel

‘My heart’s warm blood gush out upon your hands;’
 Since from your spring I drew the purple stream,
 And I must pay it back if you demand it. *[weakness!]*

Baj. Hence, from my thoughts, thou soft relenting
 Hast thou not giv’n me up a prey? betray’d me?

Sel. Oh, not for worlds! not e’en for all the joys,
 Love, or the Prophet’s paradise, can give!

‘Amidst the fears and sorrows of my soul,’
 Amidst the thousand pains of anxious tenderness,
 I made the gentle, kind Axalla swear,
 Your life, your crown, and honor should be safe.

Baj. Away! my soul disdains the vile dependence!
 No, let me rather die, die like a king!
 Shall I fall down at the proud Tartar’s foot,
 And say, Have mercy on me? Hark! they come! *[Shout.]*
 Disgrace will overtake my ling’ring hand;
 Die then! Thy father’s shame, and thine, die with thee.
[Offers to kill her.]

Sel. For Heav’n, for pity’s sake!

Baj. No more, thou trisler!

[She catches hold of his arm.]

Ha! dar’st thou bar my will? Tear off her hold!

Sel. What, not for life! Should I not plead for life,
 ‘When nature teaches e’en the brute creation
 ‘To hold fast that, her best, her noblest gift?’
 Look on my eyes, which you so oft have kiss’d,
 And swore they were your best-lov’d queen’s, my mo-
 Behold ’em now, streaming for mercy, mercy! *[ther’s:]*
 Look on me, and deny me, if you can!

‘’Tis but for life I beg. Is that a boon

‘So hard for me t’ obtain, or you to grant?’

Oh, spare me! spare your Selima, my father!

Baj. A lazy sloth hangs on my resolution:
 It is my Selima!—Ha! What, my child!

And

And can I murder her?—Dreadful imagination!
 Again they come! I leave her to my foes! [*Shouts.*
 And shall they triumph o'er the race of Bajazet!
 Die, Selima! Is that a father's voice?
 Rouse, rouse, my fury! Yes, she dies the victim
 To my lost hopes. Out, out, thou foolish nature!
 Justly she shares the ruin she has made.
 Seize her, ye * slaves! and strangle her this moment!
 [*To the mutes.*

Sel. Oh, let me die by you! Behold my breast!
 I wo't not shrink! Oh, save me but from these!
 Baj. Dispatch. [*The mutes seize her.*

Sel. But for a moment, while I pray
 That Heav'n may guard my royal father.

Baj. Dogs!

Sel. That you may only bless me, ere I die. [*Shout.*

Baj. Ye tedious villains, then the work is mine.

[*As Bajazet runs at Selima, with his sword, enter Tamerlane, Axalla, &c. Axalla gets between Bajazet and Selima, whilst Tamerlane and the rest drive Bajazet and the mutes off the stage.*]

Ax. And am I come to save thee? Oh, my joy!

'Be this the whitest hour of all my life;
 This one success is more than all my wars,
 The noblest, dearest glory of my sword.

Sel. Alas, Axalla! Death has been around me;
 My coward soul still trembles at the fright,
 And seems but half secure, e'en in thy arms.

Ax. Retire, my fair, and let me guard thee forth:
 Blood and tumultuous slaughter are about us,
 'And danger in her ugliest form is here;
 Nor will the pleasure of my heart be full,
 'Till all my fears are ended in thy safety.

[*Exit Axalla and Selima.*

Enter Tamerlane, the prince of Tanais, Zama, Mirvan, and soldiers; with Bajazet, Omar, and the Dervise prisoners.

Tam. Mercy at length gives up her peaceful sceptre,
 And Justice sternly takes her turn to govern;
 'Tis a rank world, and asks her keenest sword,
 To cut up villainy of monstrous growth.
 Zama, take care, that with the earliest dawn
 Those traitors meet the fate their treason merits!

[*Pointing to Omar and the Dervise.*
 For

For thee, thou tyrant ! [*To Baj.*] whose oppressive violence
 Has ruin'd those thou should'st protect at home ;
 ' Whole wars, whole slaughters, whole assassinations,
 ' (That basest thirst of blood ! that sin of cowards !)
 ' Whose faith so often giv'n and always violated,
 ' Have been th' offence of Heav'n and plague of earth,'
 What punishment is equal to thy crimes ?

The doom, thy rage design'd for me, be thine :
 Clos'd in a cage. like some destructive beast,
 I'll have thee borne about, in public view,
 A great example of that righteous vengeance
 That waits on cruelty and pride like thine.

Baj. It is beneath me to decline my fate ;
 I stand prepar'd to meet thy utmost hate ;
 Yet think not, I will long thy triumph see :
 None want the means, when the soul dares be free,
 I'll curse thee with my last, my parting breath,
 And keep the courage of my life in death ;
 Then boldly venture on that world unknown ;
 It cannot use me worse than this has done.

[*Exit Bajazet, guarded.*]

Tam. Behold the vain effects of earth-born pride,
 That scorn'd Heaven's laws, and all its pow'r defy'd,
 That could the hand which form'd it first forget,
 And fondly say, I made myself be great !
 But justly those above assert their sway,
 And teach e'en Kings what homage they should pay,
 Who then rule best, when mindful to obey. }

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

E P I L O G U E.

TOO well we saw what must have been our fate,
 When harmony with beauty join'd, of late,
 Threaten'd the ruin of our sinking state ;
 Till you, from whom our being we receive,
 In pity bid your own creation live :
 With moving sounds you kindly drew the fair,
 And fix'd, once more, that shining circle here :
 The lyre you bring is half Apollo's praise ;
 Be ours the task to win and wear his bays.

Thin houses were before so frequent to us,
 We wanted not a project to undo us;
 We seldom saw your honours, but by chance,
 As some folks meet their friends of Spain and France:
 'Twas verse decay'd, or politics improv'd,
 That had estrang'd you thus from what you lov'd.
 Time was, when busy faces were a jest,
 When wit and pleasure were in most request;
 When chearful theatres with crowds were grac'd;
 But those good days of poetry are past;
 Now four reformers in an empty pit,
 With table-books, as at a lecture, sit,
 To take notes, and give evidence 'gainst wit.
 Those who were once our friends, employ'd elsewhere,
 Are busy now in settling peace and war:
 With careful brows, at Tom's and Will's they meet,
 And ask who did elections lose or get——
 Our friend has lost it——Faith I am sorry for't,
 He's a good man, and ne'er was for the court;
 He to no government will sue for grace,
 By want of merit safe against a place,
 By spite a patriot made, and sworn t' oppose
 All who are uppermost, as England's foes:
 Let whig or tory, any side prevail,
 Still 'tis his constant privilege to rail.
 Another, that the tax and war may cease,
 Talks of the duke of Anjou's right, and peace:
 And, from Spain's wise example, is for taking
 A viceroy of the mighty monarch's making;
 Who should all rights and liberties maintain,
 And English laws by learn'd dragoons explain.

Come leave these politics, and follow wit;
 Here, uncontroll'd you may in judgement sit;
 We'll never differ with a crowded pit:
 We'll take you all, e'en on your own conditions,
 Think you great men, and wond'rous politicians;
 And if you slight the offers which we make you,
 No Brentford princes will for statesmen take you.

THE
DISTREST MOTHER.

A
T R A G E D Y.

WRITTEN BY

Mr. AMB. PHILIPS.

Marked with the Variations in the

M A N A G E R's B O O K,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent Garden.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. LOWNDES, W. NICOLL, and
S. BLADON.

M, DCC, LXXXVI,

* * The Reader is desired to observe, that
* the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres, are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas ; as in line 3 to 6, page 15.

T O

HER GRACE THE
 DUCHESS of MONTAGUE.

MADAM,

THIS Tragedy, which I do myself the honour to dedicate to your Grace, is formed upon an original which passes for the most finished piece, in this kind of writing, that has ever been produced in the *French* language. The principal action and main distress of the play, is of such a nature, as seems more immediately to claim the patronage of a lady; and when I consider the great and shining characters of antiquity that are celebrated in it, I am naturally directed to inscribe it to a person, whose illustrious father has, by a long series of glorious actions, (for the service of his country, and in defence of the liberties of *Europe*) not only surpassed the generals of his own time, but equalled the greatest heroes of former ages. The name of *Hector* could not be more ter-

rible to the *Greeks*, than that of the Duke of *Marlborough* has been to the *French*.

The refined taste you are known to have in all entertainments for the diversion of the public, and the peculiar life and ornament your presence gives to all assemblies, was no small motive to determine me in the choice of my patroness. The charms that shine out in the person of your Grace, may convince every one, that there is nothing unnatural in the power which is ascribed to the beauty of *Andromache*.

The strict regard I have had to decency and good manners throughout this work, is the greatest merit I pretend to plead in favour of my presumption; and is, I am sensible, the only argument that can recommend it most effectually to your protection.

I am, with the greatest respect,

M A D A M,

Your Grace's most humble,

And most obedient servant,

AMB. PHILIPS.

P R E F A C E.

IN all the works of genius and invention, whether in verse or prose, there are, in general, but three manners of style; the one sublime, and full of majesty; the other, simple, natural, and easy; and the third, swelling, forced, and unnatural. An injudicious affectation and sublimity, is what has betrayed a great many authors into the latter; not considering that real greatness in writing, as well as in manners, consists in an unaffected simplicity. The true sublime does not lie in strained metaphors and the pomp of words, but rises out of noble sentiments and strong images of nature; which will always appear the more conspicuous, when the language does not swell to hide and overshadow them.

These are the considerations that have induced me to write this Tragedy in a style very different from what has been usually practised among us in poems of this nature. I have had the advantage to copy after a very great master, whose writings are deservedly admired in all parts of *Europe*, and whose excellencies are too well known to the men of letters in this nation, to stand in need of any farther discovery of them here. If I have been able to keep up to the beauties of Monsieur *Racine*, in my attempts, and to do him no prejudice in the liberties I have taken frequently to vary from so great a poet, I shall have no reason to be dissatisfied with the labour it has cost me to bring the completest of his works upon the *English* stage.

I shall trouble my reader no farther, than to give him some short hints relating to this play, from the preface of the *French* author. The following lines of *Virgil* mark out the scene, the action, and the our principal actors in this Tragedy, together with their distinct characters; excepting that of *Hermione*, whose rage and jealousy is sufficiently painted in the *Andromache* of *Euripides*.

*Litteræque Epiri legimus, portuque subimus
 Chæoni, et celsam Buthroti ascendimus urbem—
 Solemnes cum sorte dapes, et tristia dona
 Libabat cineri Andromache, manesque vocabat
 Hecoreum ad tumulum, viridi quem cespite inanem,
 Et gemmas, causam lacrymis, sacraverat Aras—
 Injecit cultum, et demissa voce locuta est :
 O felix una cunctis alias Priameia virgo,
 Hiciliæ ad tumulum, Trójæ sub mœnibus altis
 Fussa rori ! quæ sortitus non pertulit ullos,
 Nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile.
 Nos patria incensa, diversa per æquora vectæ,
 Stipis Achillææ fastus, juvenemque superbum,
 Servitio unixæ tulimus, qui deinde secutus
 Ledeæam Hermionem, Lacedæmonisque Hymenæas—
 Assillum, ereptæ magno inflammatus amore
 Conjugis, et scelerum furis agitato Orestes
 Excipit incautum patriasque obtruncat ad aras.*

VIRG. ÆN. Lib.iii.

The great concern of *Andromache*, in the Greek poet, is for the life of *Molossus*, a son she had by *Pyrrhus*. But it is more conformable to the general notion we form of that princess, at this great distance of time, to represent her as the disconsolate widow of *Hector*, and to suppose her the mother only of *Assyanax*. Considered in this light, no doubt, she moves our compassion much more effectually, than she could be imagined to do in any distress for a son by a second husband.

In order to bring about this beautiful incident, so necessary to heighten in *Andromache* the character of a tender mother, an affectionate wife, and a widow full of veneration for the memory of her deceased husband, the life of *Assyanax* is indeed a little prolonged beyond the term fixed to it by the general consent of the ancient authors. But so long as there is nothing improbable in the supposition, a judicious critic will always be pleased when he finds a matter of fact (especially so far removed in the dark and fabulous ages) falsified, for the embellishment of a whole poem.

F R O.

P R O L O G U E.

SINCE fancy by itself is loose and vain,
The wise by rules that airy power restrain :
They think those writers mad, who at their ease
Convey this house and audience where they please ;
Who nature's stated distances confound,
And make this spot all soils the sun goes round :
'Tis nothing, when a fancied scene's in view,
To skip from Covent-Garden to Peru.

But Shakspeare's self transgress ; and shall each elf,
Each pygmy genius, quote great Shakspeare's self !
What critic dares prescribe what's just and fit,
Or mark out limits for such boundless wit !
Shakspeare could travel thro' earth, sea, and air,
And paint out all the powers and wonders there,
In barren deserts he makes nature smile,
And gives us feasts in his enchanted isle.
Our author does his feeble force confess,
Nor dares pretend such merit to transgress ;
Does not such shining gifts of genius share,
And therefore makes propriety his care.
Your treat with studied decency he serves ;
Not only rules of time and place preserves,
But strives to keep his character intire,
With French correctness, and with British fire.

This piece, presented in a foreign tongue,
When France was glorious, and her monarch young,
An hundred times a crowded audience drew,
An hundred times repeated, still was new.

Pyrrhus, provok'd, to no wild rants betray'd,
Resents his generous love so ill repaid ;
Does like a man resent, a prince upbraid.
His sentiments disclose a royal mind,
Nor is he known a king from guards behind.

Injur'd Hermione demands relief,
But not from heavy narratives of grief :
In conscious majesty her pride is shewn ;
Born to avenge her wrongs, but not bemoan.

Andromache——If in our author's lines,
As in the great original she shines,
Nothing but from barbarity she fears ;
Attend with silence, you'll applaud with tears.

Dramatis Personæ, 1786.

M E N.

AT DRURY-LANE.

AT COVENT-GARDEN.

Pyrrius, son of Achilles, and King of Epirus, in love with
Andromache, but betrothed to Hermione —

Mr. PALMER.

Mr. POPE.

Phoenix, Counsellor to Pyrrius —

Mr. PACKER.

Mr. W. PALMER.

Oristes, son of Agamemnon, Ambassador from the Greeks
to Pyrrius, in love with Hermione —

Mr. SMITH.

Mr. HOLMAN.

Pylades, friend to Oristes, separated from him in a storm,
driven on the coast of Epirus, and detained by contrary
winds in the court of Pyrrius —

Mr. BARRYMORE.

Mr. DAVIES.

W O M E N.

Andromache, Hector's widow, captive to Pyrrius, and
mother to Astyanax —

Miss KEMBLE.

Mrs. WELLS.

Cephisa, confidant to Andromache —

Miss TIDSWELL.

Mrs. MORTON.

Hermione, daughter to Menelaus and Helen, betrothed to
Pyrrius —

Mrs. SIDDON.

Miss BRUNTON.

Cleone, confidant to Hermione —

Miss COLLINS.

Miss STUART.

Attendants on Pyrrius and Oristes, &c.

The SCENE, a Great Hall in the Court of Pyrrius, at Butthrotos, the capital City of Epirus.

T H E

DISTREST MOTHER.

A C T I.

Enter Orestes, Pylades, and Attendants.

Oref. **O** *Pylades!* what's life without a friend!
At sight of thee my gloomy soul cheers up,
My hopes revive, and gladness dawns within me.
After an absence of six tedious moons,
How could I hope to find my *Pylades*,
My joy, my comfort! on this fatal shore!
Even in the court of *Pyrrhus*? in these realms,
These hated realms, so cross to all my wishes.
O, my brave friend! may no blind stroke of fate
Divide us more, and tear me from myself.

Pyl. O prince! O my *Orestes*! O my friend!—
Thus let me speak the welcome of my heart [*Embracing.*
Since I have gain'd this unexpected meeting,
Blest be the powers that barr'd my way to *Greece*,
And kept me here! ever since the unhappy day
When warring winds (*Epirus* full in view)
Sunder'd our barks on the loud stormy main.

Oref. It was, indeed, a morning full of horror!

Pyl. A thousand boding cares have rack'd my soul
In your behalf. Often, with tears, I mourn'd
The fatal ills, to which your life's involv'd;
And grudg'd you dangers which I could not share.
I fear'd to what extremities the black despair
That prey'd upon your mind, might have betray'd you,
And lest the Gods, in pity to your woes,
Should hear your pray'rs, and take the life you loath'd.
But now with joy I see you!——The retinue,
And numerous followers that surround you here,

Speak better fortunes, and a mind dispos'd
To relish life.

Oref. Alas! my friend, who knows
The destiny, to which I stand reserv'd!
I come in search of an inhuman fair;
And live or die, as she decrees my fate.

Pyl. You much surprise me, prince!—I thought you
cur'd

Of your unpity'd, unsuccessful passion.
Why, in *Epirus*, should you hope to find
Hermione less cruel, than at *Sparta*?
I thought her pride, and the disdainful manner
In which she treated all your constant sufferings,
Had broke your fetters, and assur'd your freedom:
Asham'd of your repulse, and slighted vows,
You hated her; you talk'd of her no more:
Prince, you deceiv'd me.

Oref. I deceiv'd myself.
Do not upbraid the unhappy man that loves thee.
Thou know'st I never hid my passion from thee;
Thou saw'st it, in its birth, and in its progress;
And when, at last, the hoary King, her father,
Great *Menelaus*, gave away his daughter,
His lovely daughter, to the happy *Pyrrhus*,
Th' avenger of his wrongs, thou saw'st my grief,
My torture, my despair; ' and how I dragg'd,
' From sea to sea, a heavy chain of woes.

O *Pylades*! my heart has bled within me,
To see thee, prest with sorrows not thy own,
Still wand'ring with me, like a banish'd man,
Watchful, and anxious for thy wretched friend,
To temper the wild transports of my mind,
And save me from myself.

Pyl. Why thus unkind?
Why will you envy me the pleasing task
Of generous love, and sympathizing friendship?

Oref. Thou miracle of truth!—But hear me on.
When in the midst of my disastrous fate,
I thought how the divine *Hermione*,
Deaf to the vows, regardless of my plaints,
Gave up herself, and all her charms, to *Pyrrhus*;

Thou

Thou may'st remember, I abhorr'd her name,
 Strove to forget her, and repay her scorn.
 I made my friends, and even myself, believe
 My soul was freed. Alas! I did not see,
 That all the malice of my heart was love.
 Triumphant thus, and yet a captive still,
 In *Greece* I landed, and in *Greece* I found
 The assembled princes all alarm'd with fears,
 In which their common safety seem'd concern'd.
 I join'd them: for I hop'd that war and glory
 Might fill my mind, and take up all my thoughts;
 And that my shatter'd soul, impair'd with grief,
 Once more would reassume its wonted vigour,
 And every idle passion quit my breast.

Pyl. The thought was worthy *Agamemnon's* son:

Oref. But see the strange perverseness of my stars,
 Which throws me on the rock I strove to shun!
 The jealous chiefs, and all the states of *Greece*,
 With one united voice complain of *Pyrrhus*;
 That now, forgetful of the promise giv'n,
 And mindless of his godlike father's fate,
Astyanax he nurses in his court;
Astyanax, the young, surviving hope
 Of ruin'd *Troy*; *Astyanax*, descended
 From a long race of kings—great *Hector's* son.

Pyl. A name still dreadful in the ears of *Greece*!
 But, prince, you'll cease to wonder, why the child
 Lives thus protected in the court of *Pyrrhus*,
 When you shall hear, the bright *Andromache*,
 His lovely captive, charms him from his purpose:
 The mother's beauty guards the helpless son.

Oref. Your tale confirms what I have heard; and hence
 Spring all my hopes. Since my proud rival woos
 Another partner to his throne and bed,
Hermione may still be mine. Her father,
 The injur'd *Menelaus*, thinks already
 His daughter slighted, and th' intended nuptials
 Too long delay'd. I heard his loud complaints
 With secret pleasure; and was glad to find
 Th' ungrateful maid neglected in her turn,
 And all my wrongs aveng'd in her disgrace.

Pyl.

Pyl. Oh, may you keep your just resentments warm!

Oref. Resentments! O my friend, too soon I found
 They grew not out of hatred. I am betray'd:
 I practise on myself, and fondly plot
 My own undoing. Goaded on by love,
 I canvass'd all the suffrages of *Greece*;
 And here I come, their sworn ambassador,
 To speak their jealousies, and claim this boy.

Pyl. *Pyrrhus* will treat your embassy with scorn,
 Full of *Achilles*, his redoubted fire;
Pyrrhus is proud, impetuous, headstrong, fierce;
 Made up of passions: will he then be sway'd,
 And give to death the son of her he loves?

Oref. Oh, would he render up *Hermione*,
 And keep *Astynax*, I should be blest!
 He must; he shall: *Hermione* is my life,
 My soul, my rapture!——I'll no longer curb
 The strong desire that hurries me to madness:
 I'll give a loose to love; I'll bear her hence;
 I'll tear her from his arms; I'll——O, ye Gods!
 Give me *Hermione*, or let me die!—
 But tell me, *Pylades*, how stand my hopes?
 Is *Pyrrhus* still enamour'd with her charms?
 Or dost thou think he'll yield me up the prize,
 The dear, dear prize, which he has ravish'd from me!

Pyl. I dare not flatter your fond hopes so far;
 The King, indeed, cold to the *Spartan* Princess,
 Turns all his passion to *Andromache*,
 Hector's afflicted widow. But in vain,
 With interwoven love and rage, he sues
 The charming captive, obstinately cruel.
 Oft he alarms her for her child, confin'd
 Apart; and when her tears begin to flow,
 As soon he stops them, and recalls his threats.
Hermione a thousand times has seen
 His ill-requited vows return to her;
 And takes his indignation all for love.
 What can be gather'd from a man so various?
 He may, in the disorder of his soul,
 Wed her he hates, and punish her he loves.

Oref.

Oref. But tell me, how the wrong'd *Hermione*
Brooks her slow nuptials, and dishonour'd charms?

Pyl. *Hermione* would fain be thought to scorn
Her wavering lover, and disdain his fallhood;
But, spite of all her pride and conscious beauty,
She mourns in secret her neglected charms,
And oft has made me privy to her tears;
Still threatens to be gone, yet still she stays,
And sometimes sighs, and wishes for *Orestes*.

Oref. Ah, were those wishes from her heart, my friend,
I'd fly in transport—— [Flourish within.

Pyl. Hear!——The King approaches
To give you audience. Speak your embassy
Without reserve: urge the demands of *Greece*;
And in the name of all her kings, require
That *Hector's* son be given into your hands.
Pyrrius, instead of granting what they ask,
To speed his love, and win the *Trojan* dame,
Will make it merit to preserve her son.
But, see: he comes!

Oref. Meanwhile, my *Pylades*,
Go, and dispose *Hermione* to see
Her lover, who is come thus far, to throw
Himself, in all his sorrows, at her feet. [Exit *Pylades*.

Enter Pyrrhus, Phœnix, and Attendants.
Before I speak the message of the *Greeks*,
Permit me, sir, to glory in the title
Of their ambassador; since I behold
Troy's vanquisher, and great *Achilles' son*,
Nor does the son rise short of such a father:
If *Hector* fell by him, *Troy* fell by you.
But what your father never would have done,
You do. You cherish the remains of *Troy*;
And, by an ill-tim'd pity, keep alive
The dying embers of a ten year's war.
Have you so soon forgot the mighty *Hector*?
'The *Greeks* remember his high brandish'd sword,
'That fill'd their state with widows and with orphans;
For which they call for vengeance on his son.
Who knows what he may one day prove? Who knows
But

But he may brave us in our ports, and, fill'd
 With *Hector's* fury, set our fleets on blaze?
 You may, yourself, live to repent your mercy.
 Comply, then, with the *Grecians'* just demands;
 Sate their vengeance, and preserve yourself.

Pyr. The *Greeks* are for my safety more concern'd
 Than I desire. I thought your kings were met
 On more important counsel. When I heard
 The name of their ambassador, I hop'd
 Some glorious enterprize was taking birth.
 Is *Agamemnon's* son dispatch'd for this?
 And do the *Grecian* chiefs, renown'd in war,
 A race of heroes, join in close debate,
 To plot an infant's death?—What right has *Greece*
 To ask his life? Must I, must I alone,
 Of all her scepter'd warriors, be deny'd
 To treat my captive as I please? Know, prince,
 When *Troy* lay smoking on the ground, and each
 Proud victor shar'd the harvest of the war,
Andromache, and this her son were mine;
 Were mine by lot. And who shall wrest them from me?
Ulysses bore away old *Priam's* queen;
Cassandra was your own great father's prize:
 Did I concern myself in what they won?
 Did I send embassies to claim their captives?

Oref. But, sir, we fear for you, and for ourselves.
Troy may again revive, and a new *Hector*
 Rise in *Asiyanax*. Then think betimes——

Pyr. Let dastard souls be timorously wise:
 But tell them, *Pyrrhus* knows not how to form
 Far fancy'd ills, and dangers out of sight.

Oref. Sir, call to mind the unrivall'd strength of *Troy*,
 Her walls, her bulwarks, and her gates of brass;
 Her kings, her heroes, and embattled armies!

Pyr. I call them all to mind; and see them all
 Confus'd in dust; all mixt in one wide ruin;
 All but a child, and he in bondage held.
 What vengeance can we fear from such a *Troy*?
 If they have sworn to extinguish *Hector's* race,
 Why was their vow for twelve long months deferr'd?
 Why was he not in *Priam's* bosom slain?

He

He should have fall'n among the slaughter'd heaps,
 Whelm'd under *Troy*. His death had then been just,
 ' When age and infancy, alike in vain,
 ' Plead'd their weakness; when the heat of conquest,
 ' And horrors of the fight, rous'd all our rage,
 ' And blindly hurry'd us thro' scenes of death.'
 My fury then was without bounds; but now,
 My wrath appeas'd, must I be cruel still?
 And, deaf to all the tender calls of pity,
 Like a cool murderer, bathe my hands in blood?
 An infant's blood?—No, prince—Go, bid the *Greeks*
 Mark out some other victim; my revenge
 Has had its fill. What has escap'd from *Troy*
 Shall not be sav'd to perish in *Epirus*.

Oref. I need not tell you, sir, *Astyanax*
 Was doom'd to death in *Troy*; nor mention how
 The crafty mother sav'd her darling son.
 The *Greeks* do now but urge their former sentence:
 Nor is't the boy, but *Hector* they pursue:
 The father draws their vengeance on the son—
 The father, who so oft in *Grecian* blood
 Has drench'd his sword—the father, whom the *Greeks*
 May seek e'en here —— Prevent them, sir, in time.

Pyr. No! let them come; since I was born to wage
 Eternal wars. Let them now turn their arms
 On him who conquer'd for them. Let them come,
 And in *Epirus* seek another *Troy*.
 'Twas thus they recompenc'd my godlike fire;
 Thus was *Achilles* thank'd. But, prince, remember,
 Their black ingratitude then cost them dear.

Oref. Shall *Greece* then find a rebel son in *Pyrrhus*?

Pyr. Have I then conquer'd to depend on *Greece*?

Oref. *Hermione* will sway your soul to peace,
 And mediate 'twixt her father and yourself.
 Her beauty will enforce my embassy.

Pyr. *Hermione* may have her charms, and I
 May love her still, tho' not her father's slave.
 I may, in time, give proofs that I'm a lover,
 But never must forget that I'm a king.
 Meanwhile, sir, you may see fair *Helen's* daughter:
 I know how near in blood you stand ally'd.

That

That done, you have my answer, prince. The *Greeks*,
No doubt, expect your quick return.

[*Exeunt Orestes, and Attendant.*]

Phæn. Sir, do you send your rival to the princess?

Pyr. I am told that he has lov'd her long.

Phæn. If so,

Have you not cause to fear the smother'd flame
May kindle at her sight, and blaze a-new;
And she be wrought to listen to his passion?

Pyr. Ay, let them, *Phænix*, let them love their fill!
Let them go hence; let them depart together:
Together let them sail for *Sparta*; all my ports
Are open to them both. From what constraint,
What irksome thoughts, should I then be reliev'd!

Phæn. But, sir——

Pyr. I shall another time, good *Phænix*,
Unbosom to thee all my thoughts—For, see,
Andromache appears. [Exit *Phænix*.

Enter Andromache, and Cephisæ.

May I, madam,
Flatter my hopes so far as to believe
You come to seek me here?

Andr. This way, sir, leads
To those apartments where you guard my son.
Since you permit me, once a-day, to visit
All I have left of *Hector* and of *Troy*,
I go to weep a few sad moments with him.
I have not yet to-day embrac'd my child;
I have not held him in my widow'd arms.

Pyr. Ah, madam! should the threats of *Greece* prevail,
You'll have occasion for your tears, indeed!

Andr. Alas! what threats? What can alarm the *Greeks*?
There are no *Trojans* left.

Pyr. Their hate to *Hector*
Can never die: the terror of his name
Still shakes their souls, and makes them dread his son.

Andr. A mighty honour for victorious *Greece*,
To fear an infant, a poor friendless child!
Who smiles in bondage, nor yet knows himself
The son of *Hector*, and the slave of *Pyrrhus*.

Pyr.

Pyr. Weak as he is, the *Greeks* demand his life,
And send no less than *Agamemnon's* son
To fetch him hence.

Andr. And, sir, do you comply
With such demands!——This blow is aim'd at me.
How should the child avenge his slaughter'd fire?
But, cruel men! they will not have him live
To cheer my heavy heart, and ease my bonds.
I promis'd to myself in him a son,
In him a friend, a husband, and a father.
But I must suffer sorrow heap'd on sorrow,
And still the fatal stroke must come from you.

Pyr. Dry up those tears; I must not see you weep;
And know, I have rejected their demands.
'The *Greeks* already threaten me with war;
But, should they arm, as once they did, for *Helen*,
And hide the *Adriatic* with their fleets;
Should they prepare a second ten-years siege,
And lay my towers and palaces in dust;
I am determin'd to defend your son,
And rather die myself than give him up.
But, madam, in the midst of all these dangers,
Will you refuse me a propitious smile?
Hated of *Greece*, and prest on every side,
Let me not, madam, while I fight your cause,
Let me not combat with your cruelties,
And count *Andromach* amongst my foes.

Andr. Consider, sir, how this will sound in *Greece*!
How can so great a foul betray such weakness?
Let not men say, so generous a design
Was but the transport of a heart in love.

Pyr. Your charms will justify me to the world.

Andr. How can *Andromache*, a captive queen,
O'erwhelm'd with grief, a burden to herself,
Harbour a thought of love? Alas! what charms
Have these unhappy eyes, by you condemn'd
To weep for ever.——Talk of it no more.——
To reverence the misfortunes of a foe;
To succour the distrest; to give the son
To an afflicted mother; to repel
Confederate nations, leagu'd against his life;

Unbrib'd

Unbrib'd by love, unterrify'd by threats,
To pity, to protect him: these are cares,
'These are exploits worthy *Achilles's* son.

Pyr. Will your resentments, then, endure for ever!
Must *Pyrrhus* never be forgiven?—"Tis true,
My sword has often reek'd in *Phrygian* blood,
And carry'd havoc thro' your royal kindred;
But you, fair princess, amply have aveng'd
Old *Priam's* vanquish'd house; and all the woes
I brought on them, fall short of what I suffer.
We both have suffer'd in our turns, and now
Our common foes shall teach us to unite.

Andr. Where does the captive not behold a foe?

Pyr. Forget the term of hatred, and behold
A friend in *Pyrrhus*. Give me but to hope,
I'll free your son, I'll be a father to him;
Myself will teach him to avenge the *Trojans*.
I'll go in person to chastise the *Greeks*,
Both for your wrongs and mine. Inspir'd by you,
What would I not achieve? Again shall *Troy*
Rise from its ashes: this right arm shall fix
Her seat of empire, and your son shall reign.

Andr. Such dreams of greatness suit not my condition:
His hopes of empire perish'd with his father.
No; thou imperial city, ancient *Troy*,
Thou pride of *Asia*, founded by the Gods!
Never, Oh never, must we hope to see
Those bulwarks rise, which *Hector* could not guard!—
Sir, all I wish for is some quiet exile,
Where far from *Greece* remov'd, and far from you,
I may conceal my son, and mourn my husband.
Your love creates me envy. Oh, return!
Return to your betroth'd *Hermione*.

Pyr. Why do you mock me thus? you know, I cannot.
You know my heart is yours; my soul hangs on you;
You take up every wish: my waking thoughts,
And nightly dreams, are all employ'd on you.
'Tis true, *Hermione* was sent to share
My throne and bed; and would with transport hear
The vows which you neglect.

Andr.

Andr. She has no *Troy*,
 No *Hector* to lament : she has not lost
 A husband by your conquests. Such a husband !
 (Tormenting thought !) whose death alone has made
 Your fire immortal · *Pyrrhus* and *Achilles*,
 Are both grown great by my calamities.

Pyr. Madam, 'tis well ! 'Tis very well ! I find,
 Your will must be obey'd ; imperious captive.
 It shall. Henceforth I blot you from my mind :
 You teach me to forget your charms ; to hate you :
 For know, inhuman beauty, I have lov'd
 Too well to treat you with indifference.
 'Think well upon it ; my disorder'd soul
 Wavers between th' extreme of love and rage :
 I have been too tame ; I will awake to vengeance !
 The son shall answer for the mother's scorn.
 The *Greeks* demand him, nor will I endanger
 My realms, to pleasure an ungrateful woman.

Andr. Then he must die ! alas, my son must die !
 He has no friend, no succour left, beside
 His mother's tears, and his own innocence.

Pyr. Go, madam, visit this unhappy son.
 The sight of him may bend your stubborn heart,
 And turn to softness your unjust disdain.
 I shall once more expect your answer. Go ;
 And think, while you embrace the captive boy,
 Think, that his life depends on your resolves.

[*Exeunt Pyrrhus, and Attendants.*]

Andr. I'll go ; and in the anguish of my heart,
 Weep o'er my child—If he must die, my life
 Is wrapt in his ; I shall not long survive.
 'Tis for his sake that I have suffer'd life,
 Groan'd in captivity, and out-liv'd *Hector*.
 Yes, my *Astyanax*, we'll go together !
 Together to the realms of night we'll go !
 There to thy ravish'd eyes thy fire I'll shew,
 And point him out among the shades below.

}
 [*Exeunt.*]

ACT

A C T II.

Enter Hermione and Cleone.

Her. WELL, I'll be rul'd, *Cleone*: I will see him:
I have told *Pylades* that he may bring him;
But trust me, were I left to my own thoughts,
I should forbid him yet.

Cleo. And why forbid him?
Is he not, madam, still the same *Orestes*?
Orestes, whose return you oft have wish'd?
The man whose sufferings you so late lamented,
And often prais'd his constancy and love?

Her. That love, that constancy, so ill requited,
Upbraids me to myself. I blush to think
How I have us'd him, and would shun his presence.
What will be my confusion, when he sees me
Neglected and forsaken, like himself!
Will he not say, is this the scornful maid?
'The proud *Hermione*? that tyranniz'd
In *Sparta*'s court, and triumph'd in her charms?
Her insolence at last is well repaid.
I cannot bear the thought.

Cleo. You wrong yourself
With unbecoming fears. He knows too well
Your beauty and your worth. Your lover comes not
'To offer insults, but repeat his vows,
And breathe his ardent passion at your feet.
But, madam, what's your royal father's will?
What orders do your letters bring from *Sparta*?

Her. His orders are, if *Pyrrhus* still delay
The nuptials, and refuse to sacrifice
This *Trojan* boy, I should with speed embark,
And with their embassy return to *Greece*.

Cleo. What would you more? *Orestes* comes in time
To save your honour. *Pyrrhus* cools apace:
Prevent his falshood, and forsake him first.
I know you hate him; you have told me so.

Her.

Her. Hate him! My injur'd honour bids me hate him.
 The ungrateful man, to whom I fondly gave
 My virgin heart; the man I lov'd so dearly;
 The man I doated on! O, my *Cleone*!
 How is it possible I should not hate him!

Cleo. Then give him over, madam. Quit his court,
 And with *Orestes*——

Her. No! I must have time
 To work up all my rage! To meditate
 A parting full of horror! My revenge
 Will be but too much quicken'd by the traitor.

Cleo. Do you then wait new insults, new affronts?
 To draw you from your father! Than to leave you!
 In his own court to leave you—for a captive!
 If *Pyrrhus* can provoke you, he has done it.

Her. Why dost thou heighten my distress? I fear
 To search out my own thoughts, and sound my heart.
 Be blind to what thou see'st: Believe me cur'd:
 Flatter my weakness; tell me I have conquer'd;
 Think that my injur'd soul is set against him;
 And do thy best to make me think so too.

Cleo. Why would you loiter here, then?

Her. Let us fly!
 Let us be gone! I leave him to his captive:
 Let him go kneel, and supplicate his slave.
 Let us be gone!—But what if he repent?
 What, if the perjur'd prince again submit,
 And sue for pardon? What, if he renew
 His former vows?—But, Oh, the faithless man!
 He slights me! drives me to extremities!—However,
 I'll stay, *Cleone*, to perplex their loves:
 I'll stay, till, by an open breach of contract,
 I make him hateful to the *Greeks*. Already
 Their vengeance have I drawn upon the son;
 The second embassy shall claim the mother:
 I will redouble all my griefs upon her.

Cleo. Ah, madam! whither does your rage transport
 you?

Andromache, alas! is innocent.

A woman plung'd in sorrow, dead to love,
 And when she thinks of *Pyrrhus*, 'tis with horror.

Her.

Her. Would I had done so, too!—He had not then
 Petray'd my easy faith.—But I, alas!
 Discover'd all the fondness of my soul;
 I made no secret of my passion to him,
 Nor thought it dangerous to be sincere.
 My eyes, my tongue, my actions spoke my heart.

Cleo. Well might you speak without reserve, to one
 Engag'd to you by solemn oaths and treaties.

Her. His ardour, too, was an excuse to mine:
 With other eyes he saw me then!—*Cleone*,
 Thou may'st remember, every thing conspir'd
 To favour him: my father's wrongs aveng'd;
 The *Greeks* triumphant; fleets of *Trojan* spoils;
 His mighty fire's, his own immortal fame;
 His eager love—all, all conspir'd against me!
 —But I have done—I'll think no more of *Pyrrhus*.
Orestes wants not merit, and he loves me.
 My gratitude, my honour, both plead for him;
 And if I've power o'er my heart, 'tis his.

Cleo. Madam, he comes——

Her. Alas! I did not think
 He was so near! I wish I might not see him.

Enter Orestes.

How am I to interpret, sir, this visit?
 Is it a compliment of form, or love?

Oref. Madam, you know my weakness. 'Tis my fate
 To love unpity'd; to desire to see you;
 And still to swear each time shall be the last.
 My passion breaks thro' my repeated oaths,
 And every time I visit you, I'm perjurd.
 Even now, I find my wounds all bleed afresh;
 I blush to own it, but I know no cure.
 I call the Gods to witness, I have try'd
 Whatever man could do, (but try'd in vain)
 To wear you from my mind. 'Thro' stormy seas,
 And savage climes, in a whole year of absence,
 I courted dangers, and I long'd for death.

Her. Why will you, prince, indulge this mournful tale
 It ill becomes the ambassador of *Greece*,
 'To talk of dying, and of love. Remember
 The kings you represent: shall their revenge

Be disappointed by your ill-tim'd passion?
 Discharge your embassy—'tis not *Orestes*
 The *Greeks* desire should die.

Oref. My embassy
 Is at an end; for *Pyrrhus* has refus'd
 To give up *Hector's* son. Some hidden power
 Protects the boy.

Her. Faithless, ungrateful man! [*Aside.*]

Oref. I now prepare for *Greece*; but, e'er I go,
 Would hear my final doom pronounc'd by you—
 What do I say?—I do already hear it!
 My doom is fixt: I read it in your eyes.

Her. Will you then still despair? be still suspicious?
 What have I done? wherein have I been cruel?
 'Tis true, you find me in the court of *Pyrrhus*;
 But 'twas my royal father sent me hither.
 And who can tell, but I have shar'd your griefs?
 Have I ne'er wept in secret?—never wish'd
 To see *Orestes*?—

Oref. Wish'd to see *Orestes*!
 O joy! O ecstasy! My soul's intranc'd!
 O charming princess! O transcendant maid!
 My utmost wish!—Thus, thus let me express
 My boundless thanks!—I never was unhappy—
 Am I *Orestes*?—

Her. You are *Orestes*:
 The same unalter'd, generous, faithful lover;
 The prince whom I esteem, whom I lament,
 And whom I fain would teach my heart to love.

Oref. Ay, there it is!—I have but your esteem,
 While *Pyrrhus* has your heart.

Her. Believe me, prince,
 Were you as *Pyrrhus*; I should hate you!

Oref. No!—
 I should be blest! I should be lov'd as he is!—
 Yet all this while I die by your disdain,
 While he neglects your charms, and courts another.

Her. And who has told you, prince, that I'm neglected?
 Has *Pyrrhus* said— (Oh, I shall go distracted!)
 Has *Pyrrhus* told you so? or is it you

Who.

Who think thus meanly of me?—Sir, perhaps,
All do not judge like you!—

Oref. Madam, go on!

Insult me still; I'm us'd to bear your scorn.

Her. Why am I told how *Pyrrhus* loves or hates?
—Go, prince, and arm the *Greeks* against the rebel;
Let them lay waste his country, raze his towns,
Destroy his fleets, his palaces—himself!—

Go, prince, and tell me then how much I love him.

Oref. To hasten his destruction, come yourself;
And work your royal father to his ruin.

Her. Meanwhile, he weds *Andromache*!

Oref. Ah, princess!

What is't I hear?

Her. What infamy for *Greece*,
If he should wed a *Phrygian*, and a captive?

Oref. Is this your hatred, madam?—'Tis in vain
To hide your passion; every thing betrays it:
Your looks, your speech, your anger, nay, your silence;
Your love appears in all; your secret flame
Breaks out the more, the more you would conceal it.

Her. Your jealousy perverts my meaning still,
And wrests each circumstance to your disquiet;
My very hate is construed into fondness.

Oref. Impute my fears, if groundless, to my love.

Her. Then hear me, prince. Obedience to a father
First brought me hither; and the same obedience
Detains me here, till *Pyrrhus* drive me hence,
Or my offended father shall recal me.

Tell this proud king, that *Menelaus* scorns
To match his daughter with a foe of *Greece*:
Bid him resign *Astyanax*, or me.

If he persists to guard the hostile boy,

Hermione embarks with you for *Sparta*.

[*Exeunt Hermione, and Cleone.*]

Oref. Then is *Orestes* blest! My griefs are fled!
Fled like a dream!—Methinks I tread in air!

Pyrrhus enamour'd of his captive queen,
Will thank me, if I take her rival hence—

He looks not on the princess with my eyes!

Surprising happiness!—unlook'd for joy!

Never

'Never let love despair!—The prize is mine!
 'Be smooth, ye seas, and ye propitious winds,
 'Breathe from *Epirus* to the *Spartan* coasts!
 'I long to view the sails unfurl'd!——But, see!
Pyrrhus approaches in a happy hour.

Enter Pyrrhus, and Phœnix.

Pyr. I was in pain to find you, prince. My warm
 Ungovern'd temper, would not let me weigh
 'The importance of your embassy, and hear
 'You argue for my good.—I was to blame.
 'I since have pois'd your reasons: and I thank
 'My good allies: their care deserves my thanks.
 'You have convinc'd me, that the weal of *Greece*,
 'My father's honour, and my own repose,
 'Demand that *Hector's* race should be destroy'd.
 'I shall deliver up *Astyanax*,
 'And you yourself shall bear the victim hence.

Oref. If you approve it, sir, and are content
 'To spill the blood of a defenceless child,
 'The offended *Greeks*, no doubt, will be pleas'd.

Pyr. Closer to strain the knot of our alliance,
 'I have determin'd to espouse *Hermione*.
 'You come in time to grace our nuptial rites:
 'In you the kings of *Greece* will all be present,
 'And you have right to personate her father,
 'As his ambassador, and brother's son.
 'Go, prince, renew your visit; tell *Hermione*,
 'To-morrow I receive her from your hands.

Oref. [*Aside.*] O change of fortune! Oh, undone

Orestes!

[*Exit.*]

Pyr. Well, *Phœnix*! Am I still a slave to love?
 'What think'st thou now? Am I myself again?

Phæn. 'Tis as it should be; this discovers *Pyrrhus*;
 'Shews all the hero: now you are yourself—
 'The son, the rival of the great *Achilles*!
 'Greece will applaud you, and the world confess
 'Pyrrhus has conquer'd *Troy* a second time!

Pyr. Nay, *Phœnix*, now I but begin to triumph;
 'I never was a conqueror till now!
 'Believe me, a whole host, a war of foes,
 'May sooner be subdu'd than love. Oh, *Phœnix*!

What ruin have I shunn'd? The *Greeks* enrag'd,
Hung o'er me like a gathering storm, and soon
Had burst in thunder on my head; while I
Abandon'd duty, empire, honour, all,
To please a thankless woman!—One kind look
Had quite undone me!

Phæn. O, my royal master!

The Gods, in favour to you, made her cruel.

Pyr. Thou saw'st with how much scorn she treated me!
When I permitted her to see her son,
I hop'd it might have work'd her to my wishes.
I went to see the mournful interview,
And found her bath'd in tears, and lost in passion.
Wild with distress, a thousand times she call'd
On *Hector's* name: and when I spoke in comfort,
And promis'd my protection to her son,
She kiss'd the boy, and call'd again on *Hector*:
• Then strain'd him in her arms, and cry'd, 'tis he!
• 'Tis he himself! his eyes, his every feature!
• His very frown, and his stern look already!
• 'Tis he—'tis my lov'd lord, whom I embrace!
Does she then think that I preserve the boy,
To soothe and keep alive her flame for *Hector*?

Phæn. No doubt, she does; and thinks you favour'd
in it;

But let her go, for an ungrateful woman!

Pyr. I know the thoughts of her proud stubborn heart:
Vain of her charms, and insolent in beauty,
She mocks my rage; and when it threatens loudest,
Expects 'twill soon be humbled into love.
But we shall change our parts, and she shall find
I can be deaf like her, and steel my heart.
She is *Hector's* widow; I, *Achilles'* son!
Pyrhus is born to hate *Andromache*.

Phæn. My royal master, talk of her no more;
I do not like this anger. Your *Hermione*
Should now engross your thoughts. 'Tis time to see her;
'Tis time you should prepare the nuptial rites,
And not rely upon a rival's care:
It may be dangerous.

Pyr. But tell me, *Phænix*,

Dost

Dost thou not think, the proud *Andromache*
Will be enrag'd, when I shall wed the princess?

Phæn. Why does *Andromache* still haunt your thoughts?
What is't to you, be she enrag'd or pleas'd?
Let her name perish—think of her no more.

Pyr. No, *Phænix*!—I have been too gentle with her,
I have check'd my wrath, and stifled my resentment:
She knows not yet to what degree I hate her.

Let us return—I'll brave her to her face:
I'll give my anger its free course against her.
Thou shalt see, *Phænix*, how I'll break her pride!

Phæn. Oh, go not, sir!—There's ruin in her eyes!
You do not know your strength; you'll fall before her.
Adore her beauty, and revive her scorn.

Pyr. That were, indeed, a most unmanly weakness!
Thou dost not know me, *Phænix*.

Phæn. Ah, my prince!
You are still struggling in the toils of love.

Pyr. Canst thou then think, I love this woman still?
One who repays my passion with disdain!
A stranger, captive, friendless and forlorn;
She and her darling son within my power;
Her life a forfeit to the *Greeks*: yet I
Preserve her son; would take her to my throne;
Would fight her battles, and avenge her wrongs;
And all this while she treats me as her foe!

Phæn. You have it in your power to be reveng'd.

Pyr. Yes—and I'll shew my power! I'll give her cause
To hate me! her *Astyanax* shall die——
What tears will then be shed! How will she then
In bitterness of heart reproach my name!
Then, to complete her woes, will I espouse
Hermione——'Twill stab her to the heart!

Phæn. Alas, you threaten like a lover still!

Pyr. *Phænix*, excuse this struggle of my soul;
'Tis the last effort of expiring love.

Phæn. Then hasten, sir, to see the *Spartan* princess,
And turn the bent of your desires on her.

Pyr. Oh! 'tis a heavy task to conquer love,
And wean the soul from her accusom'd fondness.
But, come——A long farewell to *Hector's* widow.

'Tis with a secret pleasure I look back,
 And see the many dangers I have pass'd.
 The merchant, thus, in dreadful tempests tost,
 Thrown by the waves on some unlook'd-for coast,
 Oft turns, and sees, with a delighted eye,
 Midst rocks and shelves, the broken billows fly!
 And, while the outrageous winds the deep deform,
 Smiles on the tumult, and enjoys the storm. [Exeunt.

A C T III.

Enter Pylades and Orestes.

Pyl. **F**OR Heaven's sake, sir, compose your ruffled
 mind,

And moderate your rage!

Ores. No, *Pylades*!

This is no time for counsel.—I am deaf.

Talk not of reason! I have been too patient.

Life is not worth my care. My soul grows desperate.

I'll bear her off, or perish in the attempt.

I'll force her from his arms——By Heaven, I will!

Pyl. Well, 'tis agreed, my friend——We'll force her
 hence,

But still consider, we are in *Epirus*.

The court, the guards, *Hermione* herself,

The very air we breathe, belongs to *Pyrrhus*.

Good Gods! what tempted you to seek her here?

Ores. Lost to myself, I knew not what I did!

My purposes were wild. Perhaps I came

To menace *Pyrrhus*, and upbraid the woman.

Pyl. 'This violence of temper may prove fatal.

Ores. It must be more than man to bear these shocks,

These outrages of fate, with temper.

He tells me, that he weds *Hermione*,

And will to-morrow take her from my hand!—

My hand shall sooner tear the tyrant's heart.—

Pyl. Your passion blinds you, sir; he's not to blame.

Could you but look into the soul of *Pyrrhus*,

Perhaps you'll find it tortur'd like your own.

Ores.

Oref. No, *Pylades*!—'tis all design.—His pride,
 To triumph over me, has chang'd his love.
 The fair *Hermione*, before I came,
 In all her bloom of beauty, was neglected.
 Ah, cruel Gods! I thought her all my own!
 She was consenting to return to *Sparta*:
 Her heart, divided betwixt rage and love,
 Was on the wing to take its leave of *Pyrrhus*.
 She heard my sighs, she pitied my complaints,
 She prais'd my constancy—The least indifference
 From this proud king, had made *Orestes* happy!

Pyl. So your fond heart believes!—

' *Oref.* Did I not see

' Her hate, her rage, her indignation rise,

' Against the ungrateful man?

' *Pyl.* Believe me, prince,

' 'Twas then she lov'd him most. Had *Pyrrhus* left her,

' She would have form'd some new pretext to stay.'

Take my advice—Think not to force her hence;

Eut fly yourself from her destructive charms.

Her soul is link'd to *Pyrrhus*—' Were she yours,

' She would reproach you still, and still regret.

' Her disappointed nuptials.—'

Oref. Talk no more!

I cannot bear the thought! She must be mine!

Did *Pyrrhus* carry thunder in his hand,

I'd stand the bolt, and challenge all his fury,

Ere I resign *Hermione*—By force

I'll snatch her hence, and bear her to my ships;

Have we forgot her mother *Helen's* rape?

Pyl. Will then, *Orestes* turn a ravisher,
 And blot his embassy?

Oref. O, *Pylades*!

My grief weighs heavy on me—'twill distract me!

' O leave me to myself!—Let not thy friendship

' Involve thee in my woes. Too long already,

' Too long hast thou been punish'd for my crimes.

' It is enough, my friend!—It is enough!

' Let not thy generous love betray thee farther.'

The Gods have set me as their mark, to empty

Their quivers on me.—Leave me to myself,

Mine be the danger, mine the enterprize.

All I request of thee, is to return,

And in my place convey *Astyanax*

(As *Pyrrhus* has consented) into *Greece*.

Go, *Pylades*——

Pyl. Lead on, my friend, lead on!

Let us bear off *Hermione*! No toil,

No danger can deter a friend——Lead on!

Draw up the *Greeks*, summon your num'rous train;

The ships are ready, and the wind sits fair:

There eastward lies the sea; the rolling waves

Break on those palace-stairs. I know each pass,

Each avenue and outlet of the court.

This very night we'll carry her on board.

Ores. Thou art too good!—I trespass on thy friendship:

But, Oh! excuse a wretch, whom no man pities,

Except thyself: one, just about to lose

The treasure of his soul: 'whom all mankind

'Conspire to hate, and one who hates himself.'

When will my friendship be of use to thee?

Pyl. The question is unkind.—But now, remember

To keep your counsels close, and hide your thoughts;

Let not *Hermione* suspect——No more——

I see her coming, sir——

Ores. Away, my friend;

I am advis'd; my all depends upon it. [*Exit Pylades.*

Enter Hermione, and Cleone.

Ores. Madam, your orders are obey'd; I have seen

Pyrrhus, my rival; and have gain'd him for you.

The king resolves to wed you.

Her. So I am told;

And, farther, I am inform'd, that you, *Orestes*,

Are to dispose me for the intended marriage.

Ores. And are you, madam, willing to comply?

'*Her.* Could I imagine *Pyrrhus* lov'd me still?

'After so long delays, who would have thought

'His hidden flames would shew themselves at last,

'And kindle in his breast, when mine expir'd?

'I can suppose, with you, he fears the *Greeks*;

'That

That it is interest, and not love, directs him ;

‘ And, that my eyes had greater power o’er you.

‘ *Oref.* No, princess, no ! it is too plain he loves you.

‘ Your eyes do what they will, and cannot fail

‘ To gain a conquest, where you wish they should.’

Her. What can I do, alas ! my faith is promis’d :
Can I refuse what is not mine to give ?

A princess is not at her choice to love ;

All we have left us is a blind obedience :

And yet you see how far I had comply’d,

And made my duty yield to your entreaties.

Oref. Ah, cruel maid ! you knew—but I have done.

All have a right to please themselves in love.

I blame you not. ‘Tis true, I hop’d—but you

Are mistress of your heart, and I’m content.

‘Tis fortune is my enemy, not you.

But, madam, I shall spare you farther pain

On this uneasy theme, and take my leave. [Exit.]

Her. *Cleone*, couldst thou think he’d be so calm ?

Cleo. Madam, his silent grief sits heavy on him.

He is to be pitied. His too eager love

Has made him basty to his own destruction.

His threats have wrought this change of mind in *Pyrrhus*.

Her. Dost thou think *Pyrrhus* capable of fear ?

Whom should the intrepid *Pyrrhus* fear ? The *Greeks* ?

Did he not lead their harrafs’d troops to conquest,

When they despair’d, when they retir’d from *Troy*,

And fought for shelter in their burning fleets ?

Did he not then supply his father’s place ?

No, my *Cleone*, he is above constraint ;

He acts unforc’d ; and where he weds, he loves.

Cleo. Oh, that *Orestes* had remain’d in *Greece* !

I fear to-morrow will prove fatal to him.

Her. Wilt thou discourse of nothing but *Orestes* ?

Pyrrhus is mine again !——Is mine for ever !

Oh, my *Cleone*, I am wild with joy !

Pyrrhus, the bold, the brave, the godlike *Pyrrhus* !

—Oh, I could tell thee numberless exploits,

And tire thee with his battles.——Oh, *Cleone*——

Cleo. Madam, conceal your joy—I see *Andromache*——

She weeps, and comes to speak her sorrows to you.

Her. I would indulge the gladness of my heart!
Let us retire—Her grief is out of season.

Enter Andromache, and Cephisa.

Andr. Ah, madam! whither, whither do you fly?
Where can your eyes behold a sight more pleasing
Than *Hector's* widow, suppliant and in tears?

I come not an alarm'd, a jealous foe,
To envy you the heart your charms have won—
The only man I fought to please, is gone;
Kill'd in my sight, by an inhuman hand.

Hector first taught me love; which my fond heart
shall ever cherish, till we meet in death.

But, Oh, I have a son!—And you, one day,
Will be no stranger to a mother's fondness:
But Heaven forbid that you should ever know
A mother's sorrow for an only son.

Her joy, her blifs, her last surviving comfort!
When every hour she trembles for his life!
Your power o'er *Pyrrhus* may relieve my fears.
Alas, what danger is there in a child,
Sav'd from the wreck of a whole ruin'd empire?
Let me go hide him in some desert isle:

You may rely upon my tender care
To keep him far from perils of ambition:
All he can learn of me will be to weep!

Her. Madam, 'tis easy to conceive your grief;
But, it would ill become me to solicit
In contradiction to my father's will:
'Tis he who urges to destroy your son.

Madam, if *Pyrrhus* must be wrought to pity,
No woman does it better than yourself.
If you gain him, I shall comply, of course.

[Exeunt Hermione, and Cleone.]

Andr. Didst thou not mind with what disdain she spoke?
Youth and prosperity have made her vain;
She has not seen the fickle turns of life.

Ceph. Madam, were I as you, I'd take her counsel;
I'd speak my own distress: one look from you
Will vanquish *Pyrrhus*, and confound the *Greeks*—
See, where he comes—Lay hold on this occasion.

Enter

Enter Pyrrhus, and Phœnix.

Pyr. Where is the princess?—Did you not inform me
Hermione was here? [To *Phœnix*.

Phœn. I thought so, sir.

Andr. Thou seest what mighty power my eyes have
on him! [To *Cephisa*.

Pyr. What says she, *Phœnix*?

Andr. I have no hope left!

Phœn. Let us be gone—*Hermione* expects you.

Ceph. For Heaven's sake, madam, break this fullen
silence.

Andr. My child's already promis'd!—

Ceph. But not given.

Andr. No! no!—my tears are vain!—His doom is
fixt!

Pyr. See if she deigns to cast one look upon us!
Proud woman!

Andr. I provoke him by my presence.
Let us retire.

Pyr. Come, let us satisfy
The Greeks, and give them up this *Phrygian* boy.

Andr. Ah, sir, recal those words—What have you
said!

If you give up my son, Oh, give up me!—

You, who so many times have sworn me friendship:

Oh, Heavens!—will you not look with pity on me?

Is there no hope? Is there no room for pardon?

Pyr. *Phœnix* will answer you—My word is past.

Andr. You, who would brave so many dangers for me,

Pyr. I was your lover then—I now am free.

To favour you, I might have spar'd his life;

But you would ne'er vouchsafe to ask it of me.

Now 'tis too late.

Andr. 'Ah, sir, you understood

' My tears, my wishes, which I durst not utter,

' Afraid of a repulse.' Oh, sir, excuse

The pride of royal blood, that checks my soul,

And knows not how to be importunate.

You know, alas! I was not born to kneel,

To sue for pity, and to own a master.

Pyr. No! in your heart you curse me! you disdain

B 5

My

My generous flame, and scorn to be oblig'd!
 ' This very son, this darling of your soul,
 ' Would be less dear, did I preserve him for you.
 ' Your anger, your aversion, fall on me;
 ' You hate me more than the whole league of *Greece* :
 But I shall leave you to your great resentments.
 Let us go, *Phœnix*, and appease the *Greeks*.

Andr. Then let me die! and let me go to *Hector*.

Ceph. But, madam——

Andr. What can I do more? The tyrant
 Sees my distraction, and insults my tears. [To *Ceph.*
 —Behold, how low you have reduc'd a queen!
 These eyes have seen my country laid in ashes,
 My kindred fall in war, my father slain,
 My husband dragg'd in his own blood, my son
 Condemn'd to bondage, and myself a slave;
 Yet, in the midst of these unheard-of woes,
 'Twas some relief to find myself your captive;
 And that my son, deriv'd from ancient kings,
 Since he must serve, had *Pyrrhus* for his master.
 When *Priam* kneel'd, the great *Achilles* wept:
 I hop'd I should not find his son less noble:
 I thought the brave were still the more compassionate.
 Oh, do not, sir, divide me from my child!—
 If he must die——

Pyr. *Phœnix*, withdraw a while. [Exit *Phœnix*.

Pyr. Rise, madam—Yet you may preserve your son.
 I find, whenever I provoke your tears,
 I furnish you with arms against myself.
 I thought my hatred fixt before I saw you.
 Oh, turn your eyes upon me while I speak!
 And see if you discover in my looks
 An angry judge, or an obdurate foe.
 Why will you force me to desert your cause?
 In your son's name, I beg we may be friends;
 ' Let me entreat you to secure his life!
 ' Must I turn suppliant for him?' Think, Oh think,
 'Tis the last time, you both may yet be happy!
 I know the ties I break, the foes I arm;
 I wrong *Hermione*; I send her hence;
 And with her diadem I bind your brows.

Consider

Consider well; for 'tis of moment to you!

Choose to be wretched, madam, or a queen.

• My soul, consum'd with a whole year's despair,

• Can bear no longer these perplexing doubts;

• Enough of sighs and tears, and threats I've try'd;

• I know, if I'm depriv'd of you, I die:

• But Oh, I die, if I wait longer for you!

I leave you to your thoughts. When I return,

We'll to the temple—There you'll find your son;

And there be crown'd, or give him up for ever. [Exit.

Ceph. I told you, madam, that in spite of *Greece*,
You would o'er-rule the malice of your fortune.

Andr. Alas, *Cephisa*, what have I obtain'd!
Only a poor short respite for my son.

Ceph. You have enough approv'd your faith to *Hector*;
To be reluctant still would be a crime.

He would himself persuade you to comply.

Andr. How!—wouldst thou give me *Pyrrhus* for a
husband?

Ceph. Think you 'twill please the ghost of your dead
husband,

That you should sacrifice his son? Consider,

Pyrrhus once more invites you to a throne;

Turns all his power against the foes of *Troy*,

Remembers not *Achilles* was his father;

Retracts his conquest, and forgets his hatred.

Andr. But how can I forget it!—how can I

Forget my *Hector*, treated with dishonour;

Depriv'd of funeral rites, and vilely dragg'd,

A bloody corpse, about the walls of *Troy*!

Can I forget the good old king his father,

Slain in my presence—at the altar slain!

Which vainly, for protection, he embrac'd.

Hast thou forgot that dreadful night, *Cephisa*,

When a whole people fell! Methinks I see

Pyrrhus enrag'd, and, breathing vengeance, enter
Amidst the glare of burning palaces:

I see him hew his passage thro' my brothers,

And, bath'd in blood, lay all my kindred waste.

Think, in this scene of horror, what I suffer'd!

This is the courtship I receiv'd from *Pyrrhus*;

And this the husband thou wouldst give me! No,
We both will perish first! I'll ne'er consent.

Ceph. Since you resolve *Astyanax* shall die,
Haste to the temple, bid your son farewell.
Why do you tremble, madam?

Andr. O *Cephisa*!

'Thou hast awaken'd all the mother in me.
How can I bid farewell to the dear child,
The pledge, the image of my much-lov'd lord!

' Alas, I call to mind the fatal day,
' When his too forward courage led him forth
' To seek *Achilles*.

' *Ceph.* Oh, the unhappy hour!
' 'Twas then *Troy* fell, and all her Gods forsook her.

' *Andr.* That morn, *Cephisa*, that ill-fated morn,
' My husband bid thee bring *Astyanax*;
' He took him in his arms; and, as I wept,
' My wife, my dear *Andromache*, said he,
' (Heaving with stifled sighs to see me weep)
' What fortune may attend my arms, the Gods
' Alone can tell. To thee I give the boy;
' Preserve him as the token of our loves;
' If I should fall, let him not miss his sire
' While thou surviv'st; but by thy tender care,
' Let the son see that thou didst love his father.

' *Ceph.* And will you throw away a life so precious?
' At once extirpate all the *Trojan* line?

' *Andr.* Inhuman king! What has he done to suffer?
' If I neglect your vows, is he to blame?
' Has he reproach'd you with his slaughter'd kindred!
' Can he resent those ills he does not know?—

But, Oh! while I deliberate, he dies.

No, no, thou must not die, while I can save thee:

Oh! let me find out *Pyrrhus*—Oh, *Cephisa*!

Do you go find him.

Ceph. What must I say to him?

Andr. Tell him I love my son to such excess—
But dost thou think he means the child shall die?
Can love rejected turn to so much rage?

Ceph. Madam, he'll soon be here: resolve on something.

Andr. Well then, assure him—

Ceph.

Ceph. Madam, of your love?

Andr. Alas, thou know'st that is not in my power.
O my dead Lord! Oh, *Priam's* royal house!
Oh, my *Astyanax*! at what a price
Thy mother buys thee!—Let us go.

Ceph. But whither?

And what does your unsettled heart resolve?

Andr. Come, my *Cephisa*, let us go together,
To the sad monument which I have rais'd
To *Hector's* shade; where, in their sacred urn,
The ashes of my hero lie inclos'd,
The dear remains which I have sav'd from *Troy*;
There let me weep, there summon to my aid,
With pious rite, my *Hector's* awful shade;
Let him be witness to my doubts, my fears;
My agonizing heart, my flowing tears:
Oh! may he rise in pity from his tomb,
And fix his wretched son's unceasing doom. [Exeunt]

A C T IV.

‘ Enter *Andromache*, and *Cephisa*.

‘ *Ceph.* **B**LEST be the tomb of *Hector*, that inspires
‘ These pious thoughts: or is it *Hector's* self,
‘ That prompts you to preserve your son! 'Tis he
‘ Who still presides o'er ruin'd *Troy*; 'Tis he
‘ Who urges *Pyrrhus* to restore *Astyanax*.

‘ *Andr.* *Pyrrhus* has said he will; and thou hast heard
‘ him

‘ Just now renew the oft-repeated promise.

‘ *Ceph.* Already, in the transports of his heart,
‘ He gives you up his kingdoms, his allies,
‘ And thinks himself o'erpaid for all in you.

‘ *Andr.* I think I may rely upon his promise;
‘ And yet my heart is over-charg'd with grief.

‘ *Ceph.* Why should you grieve? You see he bids de-
‘ fiance

‘ To all the *Greeks*; and, to protect your son
‘ Against their rage, has plac'd his guards about him;

‘ Leaving—

- Leaving himself defenceless, for his sake.
- But, madam, think, the coronation pomp
- Will soon demand your presence in the temple :
- 'Tis time you lay aside these mourning weeds.
- *Andr.* I will be there ; but first would see my son.
- *Ceph.* Madam, you need not now be anxious for him,
- He will be always with you, all your own,
- To lavish the whole mother's fondness on him.
- What a delight to train beneath your eye,
- A son, who grows no longer up in bondage ;
- A son in whom a race of kings revives :
- But, madam, you are sad, and wrapt in thought,
- As if you relish'd not your happiness.
- *Andr.* Oh, I must see my son once more, *Cephisa!*
- *Ceph.* Madam, he now will be no more a captive ;
- Your visits may be frequent as you please.
- To-morrow you may pass the live-long day—
- *Andr.* To-morrow ! Oh, *Cephisa!*—But, no more !
- *Cephisa*, I have always found thee faithful :
- A load of care weighs down my drooping heart.
- *Ceph.* Oh ! that 'twere possible for me to ease you !
- *Andr.* I soon shall exercise thy long-try'd faith.—
- Meanwhile I do conjure thee, my *Cephisa*,
- Thou take no notice of my present trouble ;
- And, when I shall disclose my secret purpose,
- That thou be be punctual to perform my will.
- *Ceph.* Madam, I have no will but yours. My life
- Is nothing, balanc'd with my love to you.
- *Andr.* I thank thee, good *Cephisa*, my *Astyanax*
- Will recompence thy friendship to his mother.
- But, come ; my heart's at ease : assist me now
- To change this sable habit.—Yonder comes
- *Hermione* ; I would not meet her rage. [Exit.]

Enter Hermione, and Cleone.

Cleo. This unexpected silence, this reserve,
 This outward calm, this settled frame of mind,
 After such wrongs and insults, much surprize me !
 You, who before could not command your rage,
 When *Pyrrhus* look'd but kindly on his captive ;
 How can you bear unmov'd, that he should wed her,
 And seat her on a throne which you should fill ?

I fear

I fear this dreadful stillness in your soul!—

'Twere better, madam——

Her. Have you call'd *Orestes*?

Cleo. Madam, I have; his love is too impatient
Not to obey with speed the welcome summons.
His love-sick heart o'erlooks his unkind usage:
His ardour's still the same—Madam, he's here.

Enter Orestes.

Oref. Ah, madam, is it true? does then *Orestes*
At length attend you by your own commands?
What can I do—

Her. *Orestes*, do you love me?

Oref. What means that question, princess? Do I love
you?

My oaths, my perjuries, my hopes, my fears,
My farewell, my return—all speak my love.

Her. Avenge my wrongs, and I believe them all.

Oref. It shall be done—My soul has catch'd th' alarm,
We'll spirit up the *Greeks*—I'll lead them on:
Your cause shall animate our fleets and armies,
Let us return; let us not lose a moment,
But urge the fate of this devoted land:
Let us depart.

Her. No, prince, let us stay here!
I will have vengeance here—I will not carry
This load of infamy to *Greece*, nor trust
The chance of war to vindicate my wrongs.
Ere I depart, I'll make *Epirus* mourn.
If you avenge me, let it be this instant;
My rage brooks no delay; haste to the temple,
Haste, prince, and sacrifice him.

Oref. Whom?

Her. Why, *Pyrrhus*.

Oref. *Pyrrhus*! Did you say *Pyrrhus*?

Her. You demur.—

Oh fly! be gone! give me not time to think—
'Talk not of laws—he tramples on all laws—
Let me not hear him justify'd—away!

Oref. You cannot think I'll justify my rival.
Madam, your love has made him criminal.
You shall have vengeance; I'll have vengeance too:

But

But let our hatred be profess'd and open :
 Let us alarm all *Greece*, denounce a war ;
 Let us attack him in his strength, and hunt him down
 By conquest : Should I turn base assassin,
 'Twould sully all the kings I represent.

Her. Have not I been dishonour'd ? set at nought ?
 Expos'd to public scorn ?—And will you suffer
 The tyrant, who dares use me thus, to live ?
 Know, prince, I hate him more than once I lov'd him.
 The Gods alone can tell how once I lov'd him ;
 Yes, the false, perjur'd man, I once did love him ;
 And, spite of all his crimes and broken vows,
 If he should live, I may relapse—who knows
 But I to-morrow may forgive his wrongs ?

Oref. First let me tear him piece-meal—he shall die.
 But, madam, give me leisure to contrive
 The place, the time, the manner of his death ;
 Yet I'm a stranger in the court of *Pyrrhus* ;
 Scarce have I set my foot within *Epirus*.
 When you enjoin me to destroy the prince.
 It shall be done this very night.

Her. But now,
 This very hour, he weds *Andromache* ;
 The temple shines with pomp ; the golden throne
 Is now prepar'd ; the joyful rites begin ;
 My shame is public——Oh, be speedy, prince !
 My wrath's impatient—*Pyrrhus* lives too long !
 Intent on love, and heedless of his person,
 He covers with his guards the *Trojan* boy.
 Now is the time : assemble all your *Greeks* ;
 Mine shall assist them ; let their fury loose :
 Already they regard him as a foe.
 Begone, *Orestes*—kill the faithless tyrant ;
 My love shall recompence the glorious deed.

Oref. Consider, madam——

Her. You but mock my rage !
 I was contriving how to make you happy.
 Think you to merit by your idle sighs,
 And not attest your love by one brave action ?
 Go, with your boasted constancy ! and leave
Hermione to execute her own revenge.

I blush

I blush to think how my too easy faith
Has twice been baffled in one shameful hour!

Oref. Hear me but speak!—you know I'll die to serve you!

Her. I'll go myself: I'll stab him at the altar;
Then drive the poniard, reeking with his blood,
Thro' my own heart. In death we shall unite.
Better to die with him, than live with you!

Oref. That were to make him blest, and me more wretched.

Madam, he dies by me——Have you a foe,
And shall I let him live? My rival, too?
Ere yon meridian sun declines, he dies;
And you shall say that I deserve your love.

Her. Go, prince; strike home! and leave the rest to me;

Let all your ships stand ready for our flight. [*Exit Oref.*

Cleo. Madam, you'll perish in this bold attempt.

Her. Give me my vengeance, I'm content to perish.
I was to blame to trust it with another:
In my own hands it had been more secure.

Orestes hates not *Pyrrhus* as I hate him.

'I should have thrust the dagger home; have seen

'The tyrant curse me with his parting breath,

'And roll about his dying eyes, in vain,

'To find *Andromache*, whom I would hide.'

Oh, would *Orestes*, when he gives the blow,

Tell him he dies my victim!—Haste, *Cleone*;

Charge him to say, *Hermione's* resentment,

Not those of *Greece*, have sentenc'd him to death.

Haste, my *Cleone*! My revenge is lost,

If *Pyrrhus* knows not that he dies by me!

Cleo. I shall obey your orders——But I see
The king approach—Who could expect him here?

Her. O fly! *Cleone*, fly! and bid *Orestes*
Not to proceed a step before I see him. [*Exit Cleone.*

Enter Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Madam, I ought to shun an injur'd princess:

Your distant looks reproach me: and I come

Not to defend, but to avow my guilt.

Pyrrhus will ne'er approve his own injustice,

Nor form excuses while his heart condemns him.

- I might perhaps alledge, our warlike fires,
- Unknown to us, engag'd us to each other,
- And join'd our hearts by contract, not by love;
- But I detest such cobweb arts, I own
- My father's treaty, and allow its force.
- I sent ambassadors to call you hither;
- Receiv'd you as my queen; and hop'd my oaths
- So oft renew'd, might ripen into love.
- The Gods can witness, madam, how I fought
- Against *Andromache's* too fatal charms!
- And still I wish I had the power to leave
- 'This *Trojan* beauty, and be just to you.'

Discharge your anger on this perjur'd man!

For I abhor my crime! and should be pleas'd

To hear you speak your wrongs aloud: No terms,

No bitterness of wrath, nor keen reproach,

Will equal half the upbraidings of my heart.

Her. I find, sir, you can be sincere: you scorn

To act your crimes with fear, like other men.

A hero should be bold; above all laws;

Be bravely false, and laugh at solemn ties.

To be perfidious shews a daring mind!

And you have nobly triumph'd o'er a maid!

To court me—to reject me—to return—

Then to forsake me for a *Phrygian* slave—

To lay proud *Troy* in ashes—then to raise

The son of *Hector*, and renounce the *Greeks*,

Are actions worthy the great soul of *Pyrrhus*!

Pyr. Madam, go on: Give your resentment birth,

And pour forth all your indignation on me.

Her. 'T would please your queen, should I upbraid your
falseness;

Call you perfidious, traitor, all the names

'That injur'd virgins lavish on your sex;

I should o'erflow with tears, and die with grief,

And furnish out a tale to soothe her pride;

But, sir, I would not over-charge her joys.

If you would charm *Andromache*, recount

Your bloody battles, your exploits, your slaughters,

Your great achievements in her father's palace.

She

She needs must love the man, who fought so bravely,
And in her fight slew half her royal kindred!

Pyr. With horror I look back on my past deeds!
I punish'd *Helen's* wrongs too far; I shed
Too much of blood: But, madam, *Helen's* daughter
Should not object those ills the mother caus'd.
However, I am pleas'd to find you hate me—
I was too forward to accuse myself—
The man who ne'er was lov'd, can ne'er be false.
Obedience to a father brought you hither;
And I stood bound by promise to receive you:
But our desires were different ways inclin'd;
And you, I own, were not oblig'd to love me.

Her. Have I not lov'd you, then! perfidious man!
For you I slighted all the *Grecian* princes;
Forsook my father's house; conceal'd my wrongs,
When most provok'd; would not return to *Sparta*,
In hopes that time might fix your wavering heart.
I lov'd you when inconstant; and even now,
Inhuman king! that you pronounce my death,
My heart still doubts, if I should love, or hate you—
But, Oh, since you resolve to wed another,
Defer your cruel purpose till to-morrow,
That I may not be here to grace her triumph!
'This is the last request I e'er shall make you—
See, if the barbarous prince vouchsafes an answer!
Go, then, to the lov'd *Phrygian*; hence! begone!
And bear to her those vows that once were mine:
Go, in defiance to the avenging Gods!
Begone! the priest expects you at the altar—
But, tyrant, have a care I come not thither. [Exit.

Enter Phœnix.

Phæn. Sir, did you mind her threats? your life's in danger:

There is no trifling with a woman's rage.
The *Greeks* that swarm about the court, all hate you;
Will treat you as their country's enemy,
And join in her revenge: Besides, *Orestes*
Still loves her to distraction. Sir, I beg—

Pyr. How, *Phœnix*, should I fear a woman's threats?
A nobler passion takes up all my thoughts:

I must

I must prepare to meet *Andromache*.

Do thou place all my guards about her son :

If he be safe, *Pyrrhus* is free from fear.

[*Exit.*

Phæn. Oh, *Pyrrhus* ! Oh, what pity 'tis, the Gods,
Who fill'd thy soul with every kingly virtue,
Form'd thee for empire and consummate greatness,
Should leave thee so expos'd to wild desires,
That hurry thee beyond the bounds of reason ! [*Flourish.*

• Such was *Achilles*, generous, fierce, and brave ;

• Open, and undesigning ; but impatient,

• Undisciplin'd, and not to be controul'd.

• I fear this whirl of passion, this career,

• That over-bears reflection and cool thought—

• I tremble for the event !'——But see, the queen,

Magnificent in royal pride, appears.

I must obey, and guard her son from danger.

[*Exit.*

Enter Andromache, and Cephisa.

Ceph. Madam, once more you look and move a queen,
Your sorrows are dispers'd, your charms revive,
And every faded beauty blooms anew.

Andr. Yet all is not as I could wish, *Cephisa*.

Ceph. You see the king is watchful o'er your son ;
Decks him with princely robes, with guards furrounds
him.

Astyanax begins to reign already.

Andr. *Pyrrhus* is nobly minded ; and I fain
Would live to thank him for *Astyanax* :

'Tis a vain thought.—However, since my child
Has such a friend, I ought not to repine.

Ceph. ' These dark unfoldings of your soul perplex me.
' What meant those floods of tears, those warm embraces,
' As if you bid your son adieu for ever.'

For Heaven's sake, madam, let me know your griefs.

If you distrust my faith——

Andr. ' That were to wrong thee.

Oh, my *Cephisa* ! This gay, borrow'd air,
This blaze of jewels, and this bridal dress,
Are but mock trappings, to conceal my woe :
My heart still mourns ; I still am *Hector's* widow.

Ceph. Will you then break the promise giv'n to *Pyrrhus*,
Blow up his rage again, and blast your hopes ?

Andr.

Andr. I thought, *Cephisa*, thou hadst known thy mis-
trefs.

Couldst thou believe I would be false to *Hector*?

Fall off from such a husband! Break his rest,

And call him to this hated light again,

To see *Andromache* in *Pyrrius*' arms!

' Would *Hector*, were he living, and I dead,

' Forget *Andromache*, and wed her foe?'

Ceph. I cannot guess what drift your thoughts pursue;

But, Oh, I fear there's something dreadful in it!

Must then *Astyanax* be doom'd to die,

And you to linger out a life in bondage?

' *Andr.* Nor this, nor that, *Cephisa*, will I bear.

' My word is past to *Pyrrius*, his to me;

' And I rely upon his promis'd faith.

' Unequal as he is, I know him well:

' *Pyrrius* is violent, but he's sincere,

' And will perform beyond what he has sworn.

' The *Greeks* will but incense him more; their rage

' Will make him cherish *Hector*'s son.

' *Ceph.* Ah, madam!

' Explain these riddles to my boding heart.

' *Andr.* Thou mayst remember, for thou oft hast heard

' me

' Relate the dreadful vision which I saw,

' When first I landed captive in *Epirus*.

' That very night, as in a dream I lay,

' A ghastly figure, full of gaping wounds,

' His eyes aglare, his hair all stiff with blood,

' Full in my sight thrice shook his head, and groan'd.

' I soon discern'd my slaughter'd *Hector*'s shade;

' But, Oh, how chang'd! Ye Gods, how much unlike

' The living *Hector*!—Loud he bid me fly!

' Fly from *Achilles*' son! then sternly frown'd,

' And disappear'd: Struck with the dreadful sound,

' I started, and awak'd.

' *Ceph.* But did he bid you

' Destroy *Astyanax*?

' *Andr.* *Cephisa*, I'll preserve him;

' With my own life, *Cephisa*, I'll preserve him.

' *Ceph.*

‘ *Ceph.* What may these words, so full of horror,
‘ mean ?’

Andr. Know then the secret purpose of my soul :

Andromache will not be false to *Pyrrhus*,

Nor violate her sacred love to *Hector*.

‘ This hour I’ll meet the king ; the holy priest

Shall join us, and confirm our mutual vows.

‘ This will secure a father to my child :

‘ That done, I have no farther use for life :

‘ This pointed dagger, this determin’d hand,

Shall save my virtue, and conclude my woes.

‘ *Ceph.* Ah, madam ! recollect your scatter’d reason ;

‘ This fell despair ill suits your present fortunes.

‘ *Andr.* No other stratagem can serve my purpose—

‘ ‘ This is the sole expedient, to be just

‘ To *Hector*, to *Astyanax*, to *Pyrrhus*.

‘ I soon shall visit *Hector*, and the shades

‘ Of my great ancestors.’——*Cephisa*, thou

Wilt lend a hand to close thy mistress’ eyes.

Ceph. Oh, never think that I will stay behind you !

Andr. No, my *Cephisa* ; I must have thee live.

‘ Remember, thou didst promise to obey,

‘ And to be secret, wilt thou now betray me ?

‘ After thy long, thy faithful service, wilt thou

‘ Refuse my last commands, my dying wish ?

‘ Once more I do conjure thee, live for me !

‘ *Ceph.* Life is not worth my care when you are gone.

‘ *Andr.* I must commit into thy faithful hands

All that is dear and precious to my soul ;

Live, and supply my absence to my child.

All that remains of *Troy* ; a future progeny

Of heroes, and a distant line of kings,

In him, is all intrusted to thy care.

‘ *Ceph.* But, madam, what will be the rage of *Pyrrhus*,

‘ Defrauded of his promis’d happiness ?

‘ *Andr.* That will require thy utmost skill : Observe

‘ The first impetuous onsets of his grief :

‘ Use every artifice to keep him steadfast.

‘ Sometimes with tears thou mayst discourse of me ;

‘ Speak of our marriage ; let him think I lov’d him ;

‘ Tell

DISTREST MOTHER.

Act IV.

Scene the last



G. Sherwin del. & sculp

*M^{RS} HARTLEY in the Character of ANDROMACHE.
This Pointed Dagger, this determin'd Hand,
shall save my Virtue, and conclude my Woes*

Published Dec: 28. 1776, by J. Townsend & P. Lucas.



Tell him my soul repos'd itself on him,
 ' When I resign'd my son to his protection.'

Ceph. Oh for a spirit to support my grief!
 Is there aught more, before you go for ever?

Andr. Oh, my *Cephisa*! my swollen heart is full!
 I have a thousand farewells to my son—
 But tears break in!—Grief interrupts my speech!—
 My soul o'erflows in fondness!—Let him know
 I dy'd to save him—and would die again.
 Season his mind with early hints of glory;
 Make him acquainted with his ancestors;
 Trace out their shining story in his thoughts:
 Dwell on the exploits of his immortal father;
 And sometimes let him hear his mother's name.
 ' Let him reflect upon his royal birth
 ' With modest pride—*Pyrrhus* will prove a friend—
 ' But let him know he has a conqueror's right.'
 He must be taught to stifle his resentments,
 And sacrifice his vengeance to his safety.
 Should he prove headstrong, rash, or unadvis'd,
 He then will frustrate all his mother's virtue,
 Provoke his fate, and I shall die in vain.

Ceph. Alas, I fear I never shall outlive you!

Andr. No more—thy tears, *Cephisa*, will betray me;
 Assume a cheerful look—But still remember—

[*Flourish within.*]

Hark how the trumpet, with its sprightly notes,
 Proclaims th' appointed hour, and calls us hence:
Hector, I come, once more a queen, to join thee!
 Thus the gay victim, with fresh garlands crown'd,
 Pleas'd with the sacred fire's enlivening sound,
 Thro' gazing crowds, in solemn state proceeds;
 And, drest in fatal pomp, magnificently bleeds.

A C T V.

Hermione alone.

WHAT have I done? Where am I? Where is
Pyrrhus?

Ye Gods! what mean these horrors?—I'm undone!

My

My soul is on the rack!——I cannot bear it!——
 Why do I wander, like some guilty ghost?
 What brought me to this place? What keeps me here?
 'The court of *Pyrrhus* has no room for me!
 Do I still doubt, if I should love or hate him?
 Hard-hearted man! how unconcern'd he left me!
 Did he once sigh? bestow one pitying look?
 Once shed a tear? or speak one soft, kind word?
 Did he so much as feign one moment's sorrow,
 'To calm my grief, and mitigate his fallhood?—
 Why am I still thus anxious for his life?
 Why do I start at his impending fate?
 Shall he then live? Shall the base traitor live
 'To laugh at my distress? No, let him perish!
 Be quick, *Orestes*!——Execute my orders!
 Alas! my orders! Oh, preposterous guilt!
 Can I decree the death of him I love?
 Was it for this my soul delighted in him?
 Was it for this I left my father's court?
 Have I then cross'd so many realms and seas
 'To murder *Pyrrhus*?

Enter Cleone.

Oh, *Cleone*, help me!
 What have I done? Is *Pyrrhus* yet alive?
 What say'st thou?—Answer me—Where is the king?
Cleo. Madam, I saw the cruel prince set forward,
 Triumphant in his looks, and full of joy.
 Still as he walk'd, his ravish'd eyes were fix'd
 On the fair captive; while thro' shouting crowds
 She pass'd along with a dejected air,
 And seem'd to mourn her *Hector* to the last.

Her. Insulting tyrant! I shall burst with rage!—
 But say, *Cleone*, didst thou mark him well?
 Was his brow smooth? Say, did there not appear
 Some shade of grief? some little cloud of sorrow
 Did he not stop? Did he not once look back?
 Didst thou approach him? Was he not confounded?
 Did he not——Oh, be quick, and tell me all!

Cleo. Madam, the tumult of his joy admits
 No thought but love. Unguarded he march'd on,
'Midst

'Midst a promiscuous throng of friends and foes,
His cares all turn upon *Astyanax*,
Whom he has lodg'd within the citadel,
Defended by the strength of all his guards.

Her. Enough!—He dies!—The traitor!—Where's
Orestes?

Cleo. He's in the temple, with his whole retinue.

Her. Is he still resolute? Is he still determin'd?

Cleo. Madam, I fear——

Her. How!—Is *Orestes* false?

Does he betray me, too?

Cleo. A thousand doubts

Perplex his soul, and wound him with remorse;

His virtue and his love prevail by turns.

He told me *Pyrrhus* should not fall ignobly—

Pyrrhus, the warlike son of great *Achilles*.

He dreads the censure of the *Grecian* states;

Of all mankind, and fears to stain his honour.

Her. Poor tim'rous wretch! 'tis false! he basely fears
To cope with dangers, and encounter death:

'Tis that he fears.—Am I bright *Helen's* daughter?

To vindicate her wrongs all *Greece* conspir'd;

For her confederate nations fought, and kings were slain;

Troy was o'erthrown, and a whole empire fell.

My eyes want force to raise a lover's arm

Against a tyrant that has dar'd to wrong me!

Cleo. Madam, like *Helen*, trust your cause to *Greece*.

Her. No; I'll avenge myself, I'll to the temple;

I'll overturn the altar, stab the priest;

I'll hurl destruction, like a whirlwind, round me!

'They must not wed! they must not live! they shall not!

Let me be gone—I have no time to lose—

Stand off! hold me not! I am all distraction!

O *Pyrrhus*! tyrant! traitor! thou shalt bleed.

Enter Orestes.

Oref. Madam, 'tis done: your orders are obey'd:
The tyrant lies expiring at the altar.

Her. Is *Pyrrhus* slain?—

Oref. Even now he gasps in death.

Our *Greeks*, all undistinguish'd in the crowd,

C

Flock'd

Flock'd to the temple, and dispers'd themselves
On every side the altar : I was there :

Pyrrhus observ'd me with a haughty eye,
And, proud to triumph over *Greece* in me,
From his own brows he took the diadem,
And bound it on the temples of his captive.

Receive, said he, my crown ; receive my faith,
Mine and my people's sovereign reign for ever,
From this blest hour, a father to your son ;

I'll scourge his foes : henceforward he be styl'd
The *Trojan* king : ' I swear it at the altar,
' And call the Gods to ratify my vows.'

His subjects with loud acclamations shook
The spacious dome ! our *Greeks*, enrag'd, cry'd out
Revenge ! revenge ! broke thro' the thronging press,
And rush'd tumultuous on the unguarded king.

' Their eager fury left no work for me.'

Tyrinus awhile oppos'd their clashing swords,
And dealt his fatal blows on every side,
With manly fierceness ; till oppress'd by numbers,
Streaming with blood, all over gash'd with wounds,
He reel'd, he groan'd, and at the altar fell.—

Haste, madam ; let us fly ! haste to our ships !
They lie unmoor'd—Our friends attend us there.

Her. What have they done !

Oref. Madam, forgive their rage.

I own your vengeance had been more complete
Had *Pyrrhus* fall'n by me ; and had he known,
Hermione chastis'd him by my arm

Her. Peace, monster, peace !—Go ! tell thy horrid tale
To savages, and howl it out in deserts.

Wouldst thou impute to me thy barbarous guilt ?

Me wouldst thou make th' accomplice of thy crimes !

Hence, to thy *Greeks* ! and boast thy foul exploits !

My soul abhors them ! I disclaim the deed !

Begone ! I know thee not, thou fell barbarian !

What had he done ? What could provoke thy madness

To assassinate so great, so brave a man ?

Who set thee on ?

Oref. Oh, grant me patience, Heaven !

With

With your own lips did you not curse the tyrant,
Pronounce his death, and urge me to destroy him?

Her. What if, transported by my boundless passion,
I could not bear to see him wed another,
Were you t' obey a jealous woman's phrenzy?
You should have div'd into my inmost thoughts:
My heart, tho' full of rage, was free from malice;
And all my anger was excess of love.

Why did you take me at my word? You saw
The struggles of my soul; you heard me rave;
You should have question'd me a thousand times,
Yet still have doubted, and have question'd on,
Before you ventur'd on a life so precious.

Oref. Hear me but speak—Heaven knows, against my
will——

Her. Why did you not return? Why not consult me
A second time? and, undetermin'd still,
Again return, and still find new delays?
What had your rash officious *Greeks*, dire blood hounds!
To do with my revenge? What drew you hither?
To bring on me the vengeful woes that haunt you?
Are these the fruits of your detested love?
Your fatal embassy, your hateful presence.
Drove *Pyrrhus* to my rival, and destroys
Both him and me.—He might have lov'd me still,
Had you ne'er interpos'd.—Avaunt! begone!
And leave me in *Epirus*.—I renounce
My friends, my country, *Greece*, and all mankind:
But chiefly I renounce thee! monster, thee! [*Exit.*]

Oref. Am I awake? where am I? Soft, my soul;
Be not too rash.—Was that *Hermione*?
Why should her anger thunder against me?
Was not this blood shed all by her command?—
I am indeed a most outrageous monster!
A ruffian, murderer, a base assassin!
And all to please a false ungrateful woman.
Henceforward, let the laws of nature cease;
And let the pale that severs right and wrong,
Things sacred and profane, be broken down;
Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,

Are not in safety while *Orestes* lives.
 Oh, never more shall my torn mind be heal'd,
 Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose!
 A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,
 And lay strong siege to my distracted soul.

Enter Pylades, attended by Greeks.

Pyl. Haste, prince; let us be gone: 'tis death to stay.
Andromache reigns queen: she gives the alarm,
 And vows revenge upon the foes of *Pyrrhus*.
 The people arm and muster in the streets:
 Our *Greeks* will not be able long to guard
 The palace gates, and to secure our flight.
 We must be speedy, sir.

Orest. You may depart,
 My friends—*Hermione* and I remain.—
 Her cruelty has quite undone me!—'Go,
 'And leave me to myself—I'll find her out.'

Pyl. Alas, unhappy princess!—She's no more;
 'Forget her, sir, and save yourself with us.'

Orest. *Hermione* no more!—O, all ye powers!

Pyl. Full of disorder, wildness in her looks,
 With hands expanded, and dishevell'd hair,
 Breathless and pale, with shrieks she sought the temple;
 In the mid-way she met the corpse of *Pyrrhus*;
 She startled at the sight; then, stiff with horror,
 Gaz'd frightful! Waken'd from the dire amaze,
 She rais'd her eyes to Heaven with such a look
 As spoke her sorrows, and reproach'd the Gods;
 Then plung'd a poniard deep within her breast,
 And fell on *Pyrrhus*, grasping him in death.

Orest. I thank you, Gods—I never could expect
 To be so wretched!—You have been industrious
 To finish your decrees; to make *Orestes*
 A dreadful instance of your power to punish;
 I'm singled out to bear the wrath of Heaven.

Pyl. You hazard your retreat by these delays.
 The guards will soon beset us. Your complaints
 Are vain, and may be fatal.

Orest. True, my friend:
 And therefore 'twas I thank'd the bounteous Gods,

My

My fate's accomplish'd.—I shall die content.

Oh, bear me hence—Blow, winds!

Pyl. Let us be gone.

Oref. The murder'd lovers wait me—Hark, they call!

Nay, if your blood still reeks, I'll mingle mine:

One tomb will hold us all.

Pyl. Alas! I fear

His raving will return with his misfortunes.

Oref. I am dizzy!—Clouds!—Quite lost in utter darkness!

Guide me, some friendly pilot, thro' the storm.

I shiver! Oh, I freeze!—So—Light returns;

'Tis the grey dawn—See, *Pylades*! behold!—

I am encompass'd with a sea of blood!—

The crimson billows!—Oh! my brain's on fire!

Pyl. How is it, sir?—Repose yourself on me.

Oref. *Pyrrhus*, stand off!—What wouldst thou?—How he glares!

What envious hand has clos'd thy wounds?—Have at thee.

It is *Hermione* that strikes—Confusion!

She catches *Pyrrhus* in her arms.—Oh, save me!

How terrible she looks!—She knits her brow!

She frowns me dead; she frights me into madness!

Where am I?—Who are you?

Pyl. Alas, poor prince!

• Help to support him.—How he pants for breath!

Oref. This is most kind, my *Pylades*—Oh, why, why was I born to give thee endless trouble?

Pyl. All will go well—He settles into reason.

Oref. Who talks of reason? Better to have none, Than not enough.—Run, some one, tell my *Greeks*

I will not have them touch the king—Now—now!

I blaze again!—See there—Look where they come;

A shoal of furies—How they swarm about me!

My terror!—Hide me!—Oh, their snaky locks!

Hark, how they hiss!—See, see their flaming brands!

Now they let drive at me!—How they grin,

And shake their iron whips!—My ears! what yelling!

And see, *Hermione*!—she sets them on—

Thrust

Thrust not your scorpions thus into my bosom !
 Oh !—I am stung to death !—Dispatch me soon !
 There—take my heart, *Hermione* !—Tear it out !
 Disjoint me !—kill me !—Oh, my tortur'd soul !

Py. Kind Heaven, restore him to his wonted calm !
 Oft have I seen him rave, but never thus—
 Quite spent !—Assist me, friends, to bear him off.
 Our time is short : should his strong rage return,
 'Twould be beyond our power to force him hence.
 Away, my friends !—I hear the portal open. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Phoenix, attended by Guards.

Phœn. All, all are fled !—*Orestes* is not here !—
 Triumphant villains !—The base, giddy rabble,
 Whose hands should all have been employ'd with fire,
 To waste the fleet, flock'd round the dying princess :
 And, while they stand agaze, the *Greeks* embark.
 Oh, 'tis too plain !—This sacrileg'ous murder
 Was authoriz'd.—Th' ambassador's escape
 Declares his guilt.—Most bloody embassy !
 Most unexampled deeds !—Where, where, ye Gods,
 Is majesty secure, if in your temples
 You give it no protection !—See, the queen.
 [*A flourish of trumpets.*

Enter Andromache, and Cephisa, with Attendants.

Andr. Yes, ye inhuman *Greeks* ! the time will come
 When you shall dearly pay your bloody deeds !
 How should the *Trojans* hope for mercy from you.
 When thus you turn your impious rage on *Pyrrhus* ;
Pyrrhus, the bravest man in all your league ;
 The man, whose single valour made you triumph.
 [*A dead march behind.*

Is my child there ?—

Ceph. It is the corps of *Pyrrhus* ;
 The weeping soldiers bear him on their shields.

Andr. Ill-fated prince ! too negligent of life !
 And too unwary of the faithless *Greeks* !
 Cut off in the fresh ripening prime of manhood,
 E'en in the prime of life ; thy triumphs new,
 And all thy glories in full blossom round thee !
 The very *Trojans* would bewail thy fate.

Ceph.

Ceph. Alas, then, will your sorrows never end!

Andr. Oh, never, never!—While I live, my tears
Will never cease; for I was born to grieve.—
Give present orders for the fun'ral pomp: [*To Phœn.*
Let him be rob'd in all his regal state;
Place round him every shining mark of honour;
And let the pile that consecrates his ashes,
Rise like his fame, and blaze above the clouds.

[*Exit Phœnix. A flourish of trumpets.*

Ceph. The sound proclaims th' arrival of the prince,
The guards conduct him from the citadel.

Andr. With open arms I'll meet him!—O, *Cephisa*!
A springing joy, mixt with a soft concern,
A pleasure, which no language can express,
An ecstasy, that mothers only feel,
Plays round my heart, and brightens up my sorrow,
Like gleams of sunshine in a low'ring sky.

Tho' plung'd in ills, and exercis'd in care,
Yet never let the noble mind despair.
When prest by dangers, and beset with foes,
The Gods their timely succour interpose;
And when our virtue sinks, o'erwhelm'd with grief,
By unforeseen expedients brings relief.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

SPOKEN BY ANDROMACHE.

I Hope you'll own, that with becoming art,
I've play'd my game, and topp'd the widow's part.
My spouse, poor man, could not live out the play,
But dy'd commendably on wedding-day,
While I, his reliēt, made, at one bold sting,
Myself a princess, and young Sty a king.

You, ladies, who protract a lover's pain,
And hear your servants sigh whole years in vain;
Which of you all would not on marriage venture,
Might she so soon upon her jointure enter?

'Twas a strange 'scape! had Pyrrhus liv'd till now,
I had been finely hamper'd in my vow.
To die by one's own hand, and fly the charms
Of love and life in a young monarch's arms!
'Twere an hard fate——ere I had undergone it,
I might have took one night—to think upon it.

But why, you'll say, was all this grief express'd
For a first husband, laid long since at rest?
Why so much coldness to my kind protector?
—Ah, ladies! had you known the good man Hector—
Homer will tell you, (or I'm misinform'd)
That when enrag'd, the Grecian camp he storm'd;
To break the ten-fold barriers of the gate,
He throw a stone of such prodigious weight
As no two men could lift, not even of those
Who in that age of thundering mortals rise;
——It would have sprain'd a dozen modern beaux.

At length, howe'er, I laid my weeds aside,
And sunk the widow in the well-dress'd bride.
In you it still remains to grace the play,
And bless with joy my coronation day;
Take then, ye circles of the brave and fair,
The fatherless and widow to your care.

F I N I S.



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